

FREE and CANDID *He T. f*
DISQUISITIONS

Relating to the
Church of *England*, *K*

AND THE
Means of advancing RELIGION therein.

Addressed to the
GOVERNING POWERS
IN
CHURCH and STATE;

And more immediately directed to the
Two HOUSES of CONVOCATION.

[By John Jones]
Consulite in medium, & rebus succurrite fessis :
Nunc res ipsa vocat. VIRG.

*Such a Review made by wise and peaceable men, not given to
wrath and disputing, may be so far from being a dishonor to this
Church, that it may add to the glory of it.*

Bishop Stillingfleet, pref. to unres. of Sep.

*To beg earnestly of God, that He would direct the hearts of
those, who preside over the public welfare; and humbly to represent
to them, on all fit occasions, the declining state of Religion, the
importance and the means of preserving it; these things are un-
questionable duties.*

Bishop of Oxford's charge, 1738.

L O N D O N :

Printed for A. MILLAR, opposite to Katharine-Street, in
the Strand. MDCCXLIX.

3



30h

P R E F A C E.

THE Editors of these papers, being intrusted with the care of them, by the Gentlemen, who were principally concerned in drawing them up, beg leave to give the following account of them to the Public.

The design, it seems, has been under consideration, and carrying on leisurely, from time to time, for some years. When the observations, that were brought together, were digested into some order, and the work in a competent degree finished (tho' it hath received considerable improvements since) a copy of it was, in the winter 1746, lodged in the hands of a very eminent and worthy Prelate, with an humble request to his Lordship, that he would vouchsafe, if he so thought fit, to communicate

municate the contents of it to the Synod at one of their meetings.

The copy then sent was in *manuscript*; the Authors rightly judging, that in a concern of this nature, it was not altogether so proper to make the application public, 'till it had first been presented to the Synod in writing. Which will account for the meaning of some expressions in the course thereof, that would otherwise, very probably, be somewhat obscure.

Whether it hath been judged adviseable to lay the copy above mentioned before the Convocation *, or indeed whether there was ever any opportunity given to present it to any useful purpose, we are not able to say; tho' on some considerations we are rather inclined to think there hath been none given. For our Convocation-sessions of late have usually been so very short and imperfect, that nothing of any moment could be done in them: Nor hath any thing at all perhaps been done, besides keeping up the form; which, tho' in other respects useless, seems in some sort necessary, or,

* The authors having heard no more of that copy, have thought fit, after having waited a convenient time, and shewn all possible regard to their Governors, to put into our hands that, which follows; leaving it wholly to our discretion to make what use of it we should think proper. We flatter ourselves, that if we could offer no other reason, the importance of the subject will be a sufficient apology for our making it public.

at least, expedient, in order to preserve on foot the ancient privilege and custom, 'till it shall seem good to the Government (which we hope it may in time) to make some new regulations in its favor.

This suggests to us an occasion to say something concerning the following address being directed, as, in general, to our Governors in Church and State, so more especially and immediately to the two Houses of *Convocation*.

The Authors, we are persuaded, did it out of *respect*; and they shew, we think, the greatest, through their whole performance. They had, as they tell us, the following ends in view, when they chose to apply chiefly to Convocation, rather than to any other body of men, or to the Public in general.

1. They judged the Convocation to be the body representative of the Clergy and Church of *England*. And it being their desire to apply to both, they conceived they could not do it more properly, than by applying to the Assembly, that represented them. For tho' that Assembly be now in fact little more than nominal; yet since they are still convened in legal form, and no law, that we know of, hath of late been passed, to abolish any privileges originally belonging to them; our friends, we can observe from the manner of their Address,

have thought fit to apply to them, not as divested of power, but as enjoying it, as far as the laws allow. And tho' the laws may possibly allow them more than they actually exercise; yet it may seem prudent enough in the Convocation to forbear the exercise of some part of their power in present circumstances, and to pay an obliging deference to the authority of the State: Which undoubtedly for wise reasons (which some former Convocations have but too evidently explained) hath thought fit to put a negative to their proceedings in some cases. Happy had it been, if the occasion had never been given. But it cannot now be helped. We must submit to the wisdom of our Governors, and lament the indiscretion of our forefathers.

2. The writers of this address, being concerned to see the great, and perhaps in some respects undeserved contempt, † under which the

† We must here beg leave to subjoin a Note, tho' no very agreeable one, we presume, to those, who desire the advancement of religion, and are for maintaining the honor of the Church of England.—*The Convocation (as Godolphin tells us) is the highest ecclesiastical court in the Kingdom.* And we are assured by others, who thorowly understand our laws, that it is essential to our constitution. It must therefore be matter of grief to see it observed, with too much truth, in print, that *'the Convocation is now rendred such an inconsiderable body of men, that it is become the jest and scorn of the Nation, and lookt upon as an Assembly, without any rights, powers or privileges at all;'* and which is more, *'the most despicable convention in the world, an Assembly fit only to be called together to be told they are only to be summoned, but never to meet, sit, and act to do any thing.'*

the Convocation is now fallen, thought it their duty to apply to them, in order, if possible, to retrieve in some measure the respect, that is due to them. For they are humbly of opinion, as we find by their discourse, that the character of the Convocation is not yet so low, but that it may be restored to a proper standard, by taking proper methods to restore it. And they think this may in some measure be done, by making a *public Address* to them, and thereby drawing towards them the attention of the Public.

thing.'—*Pudet hæc opprobria, &c.* On the other hand it is observed with no less truth, and not more to our credit, that '*the Assembly of Presbyterians in Scotland, the Presbyterians and Quakers in England, have their stated meetings and synods for settling matters relating to their own discipline.*'—By the way, why is this, but because *They* are voluntary Societies, not incorporated into the civil state, as *We* are? whereby if we have gained some great advantages, we may perhaps have lost greater; which it may not now be in our power to recover. But it is to be hoped the time may come, when our just rights, as a Christian Society, shall be restored to us. Nor need we much doubt it, under the present Government, if we properly apply; applying for no more than rights, that are just, and perfectly consistent with all human Government. And the original rights of the Christian Church are evidently such, in every view. If therefore the rights we would recover, and think we have in some measure lost, be no other than Christian rights, agreeing with every form of Government, and particularly with our own, it may justly *be hoped*, as our authors go on to observe, that since others enjoy their rights, we may be permitted to enjoy ours; and, *that the Church of England, which is peculiarly under our Sovereign's care, shall not be put into, a worse condition, than all [other] parties in the realm, and be denied those rights, which all provincial Churches have enjoyed from the Apostles times to ours.* However, here we leave the matter; submitting it to our Governors to judge, how far the contents of this Note may have any thing in them worth their notice.

3. Thirdly, and perhaps principally, the well-meaning Addressers seem to have this in view; to remind and excite the Convocation to make a proper *Address to the Throne*. This seems evident from divers passages we have taken notice of in their application. And some of them have freely assured us, that this was one of the principal ends they had in view.

If so, it is hoped the Convocation will address. And it is, one would think, a pity, that so venerable and so learned a body should remain so long under restraint, for want of addressing. If they cannot act without permission from the Sovereign, do not the occasions of the Church call upon them to apply for that permission? And can we reasonably think his Majesty will refuse it, when duly applied to? and when just assurances shall at the same time be given, that all the care possible shall be taken to prevent unnecessary debates, and to do all the service possible to Church and State?---When a Convocation shall apply in a proper manner, and shew a true disposition (as we hope it always will) to serve the interest of the Public; neither the King, nor his Council, nor the Parliament, we will be bold to say, will be against its meeting; and saying so, we will add,---nor against its acting.

In

In short, all the serious, intelligent, and well-inclined people of the Church of *England* wish there was something more and better done than *is* done. And they lament our continuing so long in a state of inactivity, to the growing detriment of the Church. May our Governors in Church and State take this into consideration. And may it be timely done; lest future remedies, being out of time, should prove to be of no avail.

And surely matters of such moment, as those proposed, may well deserve the notice of Governors. For *Religion* is by no means of such small consequence to the Public; being, after all, the great support of the Nation. And shall every thing else then be regarded, and Religion alone be neglected? Or shall general consultations be yearly held concerning the best means of advancing our national happiness, without taking Religion into the account; which is so essential to the happiness of a Nation; and upon the decline of which in a State, the State itself must expect to decline with it? The experience of all ages hath confirmed this observation, and will continue to give it a sanction to the end of time.

Diis

*Diis te minorem quod geris, imperas.
 Hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum.
 Dii multa neglecti dederunt
 Hesperiae mala luctuosæ.*

Religion then being the concern, the real interest, as well as duty of all, our Authors, we will presume to say so much further in their favor, have acted a right part in applying to our Governors on its behalf. Whether they shall succeed or no, is more than falls within our cognizance to foretel. But that they deserve success, is what we can very well venture to assert: And that our Governors in Church and State are concerned, for the public interest, to make way for that success, seems sufficiently evident to all, that will consider.

That the Authors did not think fit to set their names to this work, is partly owing to their modesty, and especially to their prudence, having long made just observations upon the tempers and prejudices of men. They seem, however, to have used such a conduct in their way and manner of application, that, as it cannot justly irritate, so may it by degrees be attended with good effect; by opening the way to a more free and more candid examination of things, than hath been yet usual; since both on the one side and the other, the parties

ties, that have contended about these matters, have commonly discovered but too visible a partiality to their respective tenets and interests.

But here it may perhaps be asked, What occasion for all this reserve? For supposing the authors themselves did not think proper to give their names, yet why do not *we* give ours?--- For a like reason.----Were all men of letters, what they ought to be, calm and dispassionate, ingenuous and candid, we should not hesitate a moment to set our names to this preface; nor would the Authors, we believe, to set theirs to the work. For bating this, neither they nor we can see any reason, why a work so calculated for the public benefit, should not be supported with names made equally public; if indeed that can be supposed to be of any avail to set forward the good design: Which yet is sometimes found to be best done without any names.

As to the work itself, we decline passing any judgment upon it, leaving that to the public, who will undoubtedly do it justice, be the merit of it more or less. We believe its imperfections will be overbalanced by the improvements, that are made in it upon the subject. And as the manner of handling it is less offensive; so are the observations, we think, more useful than those, that are commonly to be met with in writings of this kind:

Info-

Infomuch that if ever the revifal, that is defired in it, fhall be refolved upon, this work will point out moft things to view, that may be proper to be confidered in fuch an undertaking. And if it exhibit others, that fhall be thought lefs material, or lefs convenient to be altered; neverthelefs it can do no harm, as we fuppofe, to have gently fuggelted them; fince every man is ftill at liberty to abound in his own fenfe.

Finally, if this performance fhall appear to others, as we confeff it did to us upon the perufal, not to be altogether of a piece in point of ftyle, or not fo unexceptionable, as we could wifh, in fome other matters of inferior confideration, and of lefs confequence to the fubject itfelf; we leave thefe things to the authors themfelves to account for; which they feem to have done to fufficient fatisfaction in feveral parts of their work, and particularly in the *Postfcript*.

Having executed the trust, which we had undertaken, we fhall now make room for the authors to fubjoin what they fhall think proper in their following Advertifement.

A D-



ADVERTISEMENT.

‘ **I** T was our great desire, that no more co-
 ‘ pies of this address should be printed,
 ‘ than might suffice to lay before the two
 ‘ Houses of Convocation. If this could have
 ‘ been done, it would have given us far greater
 ‘ pleasure, than to interest the Public in a con-
 ‘ cern, which we could wish there had been
 ‘ no occasion for proposing, even to our Go-
 ‘ vernors in private only.

‘ We are sensible we have entred upon a
 ‘ very difficult province; and that peculiarly
 ‘ so, from the nature of the subject. But if
 ‘ we have treated it with all the caution, all
 ‘ the calmness, and all the tenderness, that was
 ‘ in our power (which, we can truly say, we
 ‘ have endeavored to do in every part of our
 ‘ address,) we entertain hopes we shall our-
 ‘ selves meet with no other than a calm, a
 ‘ tender,

' tender, and favorable treatment, from all un-
 ' prejudiced minds; and that, where any
 ' shall entertain different sentiments from those
 ' we have offered, they will be content to en-
 ' joy them, without inveighing against *us* :
 ' Who, in what we have attempted, have
 ' done no other injury to them or to the
 ' world, than this; that we have fairly and
 ' ingenuously delivered our own thoughts;
 ' and those thoughts lie before them and the
 ' world to judge of.

' But we call to mind, how usual it is in
 ' these cases, with men of more prejudice and
 ' passion than good sense and refinement, to
 ' launch out into invective, and throw con-
 ' tempt on those, who differ from them. As
 ' to which, we shall only observe, that the
 ' common methods of invective and con-
 ' tempt, as they are very improper upon any
 ' *serious* subject, will be more so upon this,
 ' if we have been serious in the management
 ' of it, and paid all due regard to those we
 ' apply to. Nothing of that low kind, we
 ' are sure, will fall from our Governors, or
 ' from any other persons of education and
 ' learning.

' Nevertheless, if it shall be the ill fortune
 ' either of us or our subject, to be treated by
 ' any in an unbecoming manner, we must
 ' take this opportunity to advertise our friends
 ' and

‘ and countrymen, that as such treatment will,
 ‘ we flatter ourselves, be absolutely undeserved
 ‘ by us, so it is not to expected, that our judg-
 ‘ ment should be convinced, or our sentiments,
 ‘ if they should happen to be erroneous, al-
 ‘ tered, by so improper a method of contro-
 ‘ versy.

‘ No ; it is reason alone, joined with Chris-
 ‘ tian condescension in our Governors, and
 ‘ with charity and good temper in our bre-
 ‘ thren and equals, will do the business. And
 ‘ we conceive just hopes of our equals, bre-
 ‘ thren, and Governors, that having the honor
 ‘ of God, and the welfare of this Church
 ‘ principally in their view, they will cordially
 ‘ concur in all proper measures to advance
 ‘ both ; and, by their pious and prudent ma-
 ‘ nagement, prevent all unnecessary debates ;
 ‘ which the present attempt is sincerely cal-
 ‘ culated, as well to prevent, as to render need-
 ‘ less for the future. Nor do we know of
 ‘ any other method more likely (under the
 ‘ blessing of Heaven) to settle the peace of
 ‘ the Church, and the satisfaction of all, who
 ‘ are considerate, intelligent, and unpreju-
 ‘ diced in her communion.

‘ Atho’ we would willingly flatter ourselves
 ‘ (if that was possible, or the prospect likely)
 ‘ that we shall meet with no opposition ; yet
 ‘ considering the nature of frail humanity,
 ‘ the

' the bias of education, and the force of pre-
 ' judice arising from it, we can scarce be so
 ' sanguine; and must have forgotten, that we
 ' have conversed with mankind, before we
 ' can expect, that all will be favourable to us.
 ' However, being encouraged by very wise
 ' and good men, who are entire friends to our
 ' cause and to us, we are tempted to hope,
 ' that neither that nor ourselves will be much
 ' hurt by opposition. Which, if any, we
 ' expect will come from either the one or the
 ' other of these two sorts of persons, if not
 ' from both, viz. either from men of zeal
 ' without knowledge, or men of much read-
 ' ing, without equal judgment; and both
 ' without that candor and elevation of thought,
 ' which are such distinguishing beauties in all
 ' good writing.

' As for ourselves, we desire to write like
 ' men of ingenuity and liberal education†;

and

† It was a noble wish and declaration of the celebrated Dr.
Hody, worthy a Christian Divine, who had exalted ideas of
 Christianity, and his soul molded into its temper;—*Faxit Nu-*
men, ut vel æterno ego silentio inter non scribentes delitecam, vel
semper, ut virum ingenuum, liberalis ac generosa educationis, veræ-
que philosophiæ studiosum decet, scribam: Veritatis unicæ indaga-
tor, absque omni styli acerbitate, misis, urbanus, candidus; ad id,
quod indecens est, adeo non pronus, ut nec movendus. Præmonit. ad
Job. Malalæ chron. 1691. Were the Christian world so happy
 as to abound with men of this turn of thought, and this temper
 of mind (and oh that the glorious day were once come!) contro-
 versies would soon be at an end; or else would be managed with
 that decency, and candor, and mutual respect; which, instead
 of

‘ and, if we may be allowed the favor, to be
 ‘ answered by such, as are happy in both, and
 ‘ can shew both their ingenuity and breeding
 ‘ by their writing. If answered by persons
 ‘ of a different character, we can, and proba-
 ‘ bly shall, shew our sentiments of them and
 ‘ their writings by our silence only; freely
 ‘ leaving the public to judge between them
 ‘ and us, both as to the merits of the cause
 ‘ of each, and the manner, in which each
 ‘ have written.

‘ If, in this essay, we have offered any thing
 ‘ contrary to reason and Christianity (which
 ‘ always coincide;) or any thing but what
 ‘ Christianity and reason plainly dictate; we
 ‘ desire no other favor from those, who under-
 ‘ stand both better than we do, than to make
 ‘ it plain to the world and to us, that what
 ‘ we have offered, is inconsistent with the
 ‘ principles of either.

‘ But

of making the writings on such subjects to be the most disagree-
 able and hurtful, would render them perhaps some of the most
 entertaining and most useful of all sorts of writings — Want
 of temper, want of judgment, want of a just knowledge of the
 world, and of just observations on mankind; and above all,
 want of the true spirit of Christianity, and of an enlarged view
 of its great design, is the grand obstacle, which hinders such a
 noble way of thinking and writing from entring into the world,
 and becoming the delight and practice of every Christian, who
 hath a genius for writing, and a desire and ability to serve God
 and his generation, by clearing up truth, and making it appear
 as amiable in the eyes of men.

But if, on the contrary, we have spoken only the words of truth and soberness, according to the principles of reason and the Gospel; and if upon examination, and ap-

What an excellent piece of advice is that which our Reformers give us in one of their homilies *against contention*! 'If any thing be necessary to be taught, reasoned, or disputed, let us do it with all meekness, softness, and lenity. If any thing shall chance to be spoken uncomely, let one bear another's frailty. He that is faulty, let him rather amend, than defend that, which he hath spoken amiss; lest he fall, by contention, from a foolish error, into an obstinate heresy. For it is better to give place meekly, than to win the victory with the breach of charity; which chanceth, when every man will defend his opinion obstinately.——The wisdom that cometh from above, from the Spirit of God, is chaste and pure, corrupted with no evil affections: it is quiet, meek, and peaceable, abhorring all desire of contention: it is tractable, obedient, not grudging to learn, and to give place to them that teach better for their reformation. For there shall never be an end of striving and contention, if we contend who in contention shall be master, and have the over-hand; if we shall heap error upon error, if we continue to defend that obstinately, which was spoken unadvisedly.' The genuine Sons of the Church will pay a dutiful regard to this kind admonition of their Mother: And those, who are of a froward spirit, and refractory to so loving an advice of so tender a parent, will be pleased to bethink themselves, how far they are *degenerated*; and whether the Church may not have too just reason to apply to them, what the Apostle did on another occasion, *Then are ye bastards and not sons?* Now, in honor and justice to a most amiable character, we shall here, with a very sensible pleasure, produce the words of one, who, by his good sense and temper, hath shewn himself a true Son of the Church, as well as a sincere friend to that excellent person, to whom he was writing. 'Let men (says he) object what they soberly may; what they truly believe deserves an answer. For me, and from me, if no superior hand undertakes the office, they shall always have it in the calmest manner, &c. Again: Sober arguing I never fear: Mockery and bitter railing, if I could help it, I would never bear, either for the truth, or against it.' Dr. Marshall's Letter to Dr. Rogers.

plying to conscience, it cannot be denied
but we have done both; then the single
question remaining will be, whether our re-
quests should be granted? or if not, whether
the Gospel and reason are of any farther use,
in an affair of this nature, than to shew men
that truth, which they are not permitted, to
follow?

Let the thing speak itself, and we freely
leave the event to the just sentiments and
determination of all men of reason.

Our address will soon follow, after ac-
quainting the Public, that in the copy
we directed to the Convocation in writing,
the ensuing words, as near as we can now
recover them, were subjoined to the dedica-
tion; *viz.*

“ There being but two original draughts of
“ these papers as yet extant, the first is, in
“ duty, presented to the venerable body of
“ Prelates and Divines to whom it is addres-
“ sed; the other (with some additions §, and
“ with

§ “ Particularly an *appendix*, wherein (to render our applica-
“ tion the more justifiable, and less invidious) we exhibit the
“ concurring judgment of many eminent men of our Church,
“ both Clergy and Laity; some or other of them speaking in
“ support of every main article contained in our address.”

Let it be noted, that the *additions* mentioned above, as then
designed, and inserted since; as also the *alterations*, that have
been

“ with just restrictions) will in due time be
 “ put into such honourable hands, as may
 “ safely be trusted in an affair of this impor-
 “ tance. After which the Addressors will
 “ have no further concern in what they
 “ offer.

“ If, on some accounts, which seem pretty
 “ obvious, it may appear adviseable, that some
 “ time or other hereafter, this humble address
 “ should be made public; we must do our-
 “ selves the justice to declare beforehand, that
 “ to us it will be far more agreeable, to find,
 “ that such a publication is made (if made at
 “ all) with the approbation, and by the order,
 “ of the two dignified Houses, to whom it is
 “ dedicated, than by the direction of any o-
 “ ther hands, after it hath passed from ours.

January, 1746.”

been thought proper to be made in the course of the work; are both of them very considerable: Which has been owing to the variety of observations communicated, beyond what was at first expected, as the friends and encouragers of this undertaking grew more numerous; which they did in proportion, as the design was opened to them, in several parts of the kingdom, after the first copy had been presented to the Convocation.—To this is to be imputed the different manner of address in different places, being sometimes more general and open, as intended for the Public; and sometimes more particular and private, as intended only for that Assembly, to which it was at first directed in MS.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

THERE having been, for several years past, an earnest desire expressed, by many persons of eminent learning and judgment, as well as piety and dignity in our Church,---that an opening were once made upon this subject, by applying publickly to the Governors in favor of a Review; it is hoped such persons will find their desire in some good measure gratified, by what is here attempted: At least they have their wish so far,---that here is a foundation laid for further inquiry, and also for a more free conversation than
has

has hitherto been usual, upon a topic of so delicate a nature, as this is generally thought to be. They may now, therefore, as opportunity shall offer, and as their judgment shall direct them, produce their own better arguments in favour of an undertaking, which they have so long wished to see set on foot; and by so doing, may help to bring forward that useful work, which is so generally desired, and is here, with so much earnestness, requested of our Governors.

T O

Our illustrious, religious, and highly honored

G O V E R N O R S,

In every rank and distinction

Of Church and State :

More especially

To the venerable and learned

C O N V O C A T I O N

Of both Provinces,

Being the body representative of the

Clergy and Church of *England*;

These D I S Q U I S I T I O N S

(Drawn up by dutiful Sons of the said Church,

and calculated with a sincere view to serve

her interest)

Are,

With all becoming submission,

and respectful deference,

Presented and Dedicated.

the first of these is the fact that the

the second is the fact that the

the third is the fact that the

the fourth is the fact that the

the fifth is the fact that the

the sixth is the fact that the

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the twenty-sixth is the fact that the

the twenty-seventh is the fact that the

the twenty-eighth is the fact that the

the twenty-ninth is the fact that the



A

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A P P E N D I X.

N. B. If the *Notes* occasionally subjoined to any page or pages, are not consulted 'till after the perusal either of the whole *section*, or else particular *head* of any section, to which they are respectively annexed; as the current of the discourse in the text will be less interrupted, so will the sense seldom want any immediate dilucidation, or the argument any support, which they may be designed to give it, but what may very well be postponed 'till after such perusal.—However, every Reader is left to his own discretion.

F R E E

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APPENDIX

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FR 3 E



FREE and CANDID

DISQUISITIONS, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is a happy and almost singular privilege enjoyed by the Subjects of this realm, that they are permitted to apply to their Governors in a public manner, on any subject relating to the concerns of the Public.

This Privilege, it is true, hath been often abused ; and men of ill minds have turned it into licentiousness : but the privilege itself is nevertheless just. And if some inconveniences have attended it, there is reason to believe, they have not been equal to the advantages we have reaped from it.

The State which, allows this privilege hath sometimes been indecently attacked under the shelter of it. And this very act of the indulgence of the Government hath been made subservient to purposes the most opposite to its interest.

The *Religion* of the State hath also, under this very cover, been attacked, if possible, with more violence and greater indecency, than the State itself; and mighty endeavours have been used to deprive us of a religion, which we think to be the main support of the State, and the greatest means of advancing the public happiness.

But what hath been the issue of this high debate?—Religion, for certain, hath gained a firmer footing; and we believe the State finds no reason to repent of having granted a privilege, which hath been so much abused.

All that is to be wished is, that men for the future would argue with greater calmness upon the foot of this privilege; and that whenever they have any thing to propose to their Governors, either in Church or State, they would do it with all the modesty, all the decency, and all the candor, that lies in their power; proposing it at the same time with all the clearness of reason, and force of argument, that they are able to produce, or their cause will admit.

This is fair dealing, and what becomes *Men*. It is liberal, generous, and ingenuous; and will best befriend their cause in the end, be it of more or less importance. If they have truth on their side, they need but propose it in an handsome manner: The Public will judge, and will at length do them and their cause justice. If they think they have truth on their side, when in reality they have it not; still there can be no harm in offering their sentiments: Only let them be offered with moderation and calmness. A free and fair discussion will soon shew, wherein they are wrong: and they will be glad to be directed to what

what is right; when the direction is given in a handsome manner like their own.

We, who are engaged in making this address, are sensible, the subject of it hath almost always hitherto been made a point of controversy. But we think it very possible to prevent its being made so for the future, if men will come to the consideration of it with calm minds. We desire to shew the greatest calmness ourselves; and if any debate should arise (which we trust we shall give no occasion for) we hope it will be managed with that decency, that seriousness, and sincere affection for truth, which becomes men, who desire nothing more than the advancement of that, and of the public welfare.

We cannot take upon us beforehand to answer for the inoffensiveness of our conduct in every part of our design; but in every part of it we shall endeavor to preserve a just moderation of Spirit, and to give as little offence as possible, either to our Governors, or the public. And if either of them shall discern we are in any instance wrong, or in any go beyond the line of our duty (that of moderation and temper) we desire to be kindly admonished of our fault, and as kindly convicted of our error.

Our application is to our Governors in Church and State, and more especially to the Convocation of the Church of *England*, including both Provinces.

The Convocation, by our constitution, is the great court of appeals, in matters relating to the Church: and the venerable body of Prelates and Clergy therein assembled, are not only the guardians of our ecclesiastical rights, under his Majesty as Supreme, but also the delegates intrusted by him, and their respec-

tive constituents, to consider of the state of the Church ; — what there may be amiss in it, that may want amendment ; what particular grievances deserve to be laid before the government, in order to be rectified ; and what, on the whole, may seem most proper to be done towards settling religion on its right basis, and procuring it a firm establishment, together with just liberty and encouragement, within his Majesty's realms.

When all this is done in due manner, according to the laws of the land, and those of Christian piety, humility, and brotherly love, joined with a dutiful submission and affectionate esteem for the Government ; a Convocation may then be said both to have recovered, and also exercised its ancient and legal rights ; to be a sufficient and useful representative of the Church of England ; and to have acquitted itself with honor in every point of duty and trust, which concerns the Church as an establishment, and the Christian religion as the principal Object of its care.

This seems to be the great and original design of our Convocations ; which every man of reason will allow to be a good one. And undoubtedly very valuable blessings may accrue to the Church from the just and honorable consultations of such assemblies ; when, on every occasion of their meeting, they come together with sincere views to do whatever may be requisite for the advancement of religion.

And it is in order to promote this good end, that we must in decency suppose the governing powers do now appoint them to assemble. For we cannot reasonably think a wise government would appoint and summon such a body of men from all parts of the kingdom to assemble, for no end or purpose. Because

Because as this would be inconsistent with every rational view of a well-regulated State, so would it prove dishonorable by degrees both to the Government and Convocation; and in the end might produce such ill effects to both, as could not easily be remedied by any subsequent regulations.

It is true the Convocation hath seldom met of late years to do business; and it may be as true, that many obstacles have lain in their way. But it cannot be true, that they had no business to do; or that none of them had a proper disposition to do it. If, in some instances, impediments have occurred; in others there have been none, nor, as far as we can learn, have any been intended to be thrown in their way by the State, to put a bar to their consultations upon any useful topics, within their proper sphere and cognizance.

With respect to what *we* have in view in the present address, we have the greatest reason to hope they would find permission and encouragement to proceed, after proper application to the ruling powers: Whose encouragement and sanction, as they will be always necessary to render any thing valid, that shall be agreed upon in Convocation; so will they, if obtained, do singular honor to that Assembly, and be a means to raise it once more to a state above reproach and contempt.

What thoughts soever others may have of this reverend Assembly, or in whatever degree of esteem they may consider them; yet we, who have been brought up to sentiments of candor, and a respectful estimation of our Governors in the Church, shall express all the dutiful regard we can towards them, and throughout this address shall consider

them in no other light, than as the proper and legal representatives of the whole Church of England ^(a), and consequently as the Society, to whom the grievances of that Church ought to be referred, for consultation at least, if not for redress.

To *them* therefore we more immediately apply upon this occasion; at the same time desiring all other our Governors, and all our fellow-subjects, who have any concern for the interest of this Church, to allow us a favorable audience.

The quality of our subject, and scope of our design, require, that we should make some previous observations.

1. Considering the nature of human constitutions, it is confessedly impossible, that any should be in all points complete. And it is next to impossible, that any should continue long to retain their completeness, in the degree they first had it.

It seems however to be a duty incumbent upon Governors, both to aim at perfection (as nearly as they well can) in the first establishment; and also to remove defects afterwards, as they become discernible from time to time upon just observation.

For as it is very reasonable to think, as well as in experience certain, that no constitution can be perfect at its first erecting; so doth it seem to be equally reasonable, that upon reviews it should be improved time after time, as far as the nature of the constitution, and the circumstances of the times, will admit.

(a) Canon 139.

And if the Governors have proper power to execute their duty (which certainly all Governors ought to have in such cases) they will in all reason and honor think themselves obliged to do what they well can to complete the constitution; by supplying such defects, and removing such obstacles, as prevent its completeness; especially all incumbrances, which have a tendency to bear it down, — and by both, adding to its beauty as well as strength.

2. We are not unapprehensive of the common observation, that no alterations ought to be made, either in the religious or civil establishments of a well-constituted State. — *We* are entirely of this mind *ourselves*; and only wish, that every State was well-regulated, no less than well-constituted; or being discovered to be otherwise, were by degrees amended, in such instances, as call for amendment. Length of time, and improvement of observation, make many discoveries, that under proper directions, and on proper occasions, may prove as useful to a State, as they were once unexpected: And change of circumstances (which in every State will necessarily happen with the revolution of time) may point out the necessity of altering some things; which otherwise it would have been neither needful, nor perhaps safe to alter. And whenever the change of circumstances becomes so visible and so great, as to cause very considerable inconveniences, for want of making the requisite alterations; then surely it becomes high time to think of making them, and to submit to every act of just and honorable compliance, that the times shall be found to demand. Which we hope to make appear more fully in some subsequent observations.

3. We foresee again, that some will think, and perhaps also say, that those can be no true friends to the constitution, who desire any alterations in it. — But *we* are humbly of opinion, with submission to their better judgment (if theirs be better) that those are the *best* friends to the constitution, who most desire its improvement. For certainly there cannot be truer friendship to any constitution, than to desire to free it from embarrassments, and to render it, as much as possible, in all its branches complete. Those, who may be of different sentiments, are very welcome for us, to continue in them. And we have a just regard for many, whom we find to be of such sentiments; because we find them at the same time to be honest and good men, and true friends, in their intention, to the Church of England, as well as to the civil government, under which they live. But whether they have so fully and exactly considered the matter, as the case of religion in general requires, and that of the Christian in particular demands at their hands, is a question, which we find some difficulty to determine. And we would not willingly judge unfavorably of any, whom we perceive to be men of good meaning,

The cause of the Christian religion, as such, is undoubtedly superior to every other consideration: and in order to support that of the Church of England, the former must by all means be made the principal object of our regard, as being the main and only basis, on which this fabric stands. When Christianity falls, the Church of England of course falls with it: and it is in vain we hope to support our Church upon the ruins of Christianity; or ever expect to see it flourish, when we admit or retain any thing in its constitution, which is inconsistent with the great design and exalted genius of that religion; or which
may

may be any ways obstructive of its free course, and destined progress.

It is in this large and more extensive view, that we contemplate things. We consider in the first place the grand design of the Christian religion; and in the next, the constitution of the Church of England, as intended to be subservient to that design. When therefore we desire some amendments in the constitution of this Church, we desire them only in order to the better support and advancement of Christianity: Which, as things now stand, and are no better regulated among us, we, for our parts, apprehend to be in some danger of losing ground, and by degrees of giving way to something very pernicious, and at last destructive, both to Church and State.

We speak our minds freely, as becomes real patriots and true Englishmen; and at the same time reverently and candidly, as becomes dutiful sons of the Church of England. We have no other design in view but that of promoting religion, and the public welfare. And to promote both, we aim sincerely at the improvement of this our national Church; to which we bear the greatest good will, and which we wish as happy, as any just improvements can make it. And such improvements we think it still wants, how highly soever we esteem what has been done by our worthy Reformers, and those who followed them. Those, who followed them, have indeed improved in some instances, but in too few; and in every one of those, not enough, as we presume they might, and as we think, they ought. And they have left us reason to surmise, they have followed their glorious leaders, — *non passibus aequis*.

4. Our Reformers (those eminent master-builders of our ecclesiastical constitution) were unquestionably

wise and good men. They did the best they could in the reforming of our Church, as far as the times would allow, and their knowledge would carry them.— We would not find the least fault with those venerable Leaders; who were the burning and shining lights of the age they lived in.— But as that age was comparatively dark, and many learned inquiries, together with a greater degree of accuracy in inquiring, have brought things since to a much clearer light, than that and some preceding ages were blessed with; it will, we presume, with considerate men, be deemed no unreasonable supposition, that there may be some things in the regulations they have left us, which at this distance of time may deserve, and even require, a review.

And if it be no unbecoming presumption to think this possible, we hope it will be reckoned none, upon finding it to be fact, to apply to their worthy Successors (who live in this age of more improved light, and can discern present, as well as call to mind past inconveniences) that they would be pleased, out of their great condescension to us, and their regard for the honor of the Church they are guardians of, to consider about some proper methods of rectifying those things, that shall appear to be amiss; and, on the whole, to render our constitution, as far as may be, unexceptionable; thereby making it at once the object of our esteem, and the cement of our unity.

5. The constitution of our Church is originally such, that there is liberty left for reviews and Amendments: Which is a wise and very just allowance in any establishment, ecclesiastical or civil. We rejoice in this allowance, and hope, that by a proper use of it, we may deserve to have it continued to us.

And

And since the design of these papers is, with great submission and deference, to point out some things in our establishment, which may want a review, and, as such, may deserve the consideration of our Governors both in Church and State; we hope the leading men in each, especially the former, will, with a candor and condescension peculiarly becoming them, vouchsafe to survey what we offer; and, with all just freedom and honorable impartiality, examin and judge, whether, or how far, any or all these things may deserve to be reviewed and amended.

The undertaking we are engaged in, we cannot but assure ourselves, is such, as can give no offence to any, who have thorowly considered Christianity, and have its great interest at heart. And if we shall be so happy in the management of it, as to express ourselves (as we desire to do) with every becoming mark of dutiful esteem, and Christian love; and to regulate the whole and every part of our application, with a prudence and propriety answerable to our sincerity; we have that opinion of the good sense and good nature of the Public, and of the fairness and equity of those we principally apply to, that we easily flatter ourselves, we shall meet with a favorable reception from every benevolent mind among both; and that our request will be so far from disgusting any, that it will be attended with the good wishes of all, who are friends to religion, and desire its advancement.

And therefore without any further apology, presuming on an indulgence and attention, to which we believe the integrity of our views, joined with the manner of our application, will justly intitle us; we shall proceed to lay before our Governors such things,

as are allowed on all hands to deserve the consideration of a National Synod.

And that we may give the less offence, and testify the greater deference to the judgment of such a learned body, we shall chuse to present our address to them, for the most part, in the way of humble *Queries*.

S E C T. I.

Queries and observations relating to the translation of the Bible.

THE first great point we desire may be considered by our Governors, is our present *translation of the Bible*. With regard to which, we beg we may be permitted to ask, whether that translation (after so many elaborate and successful researches since it was first made) does appear to be in all respects the most exact and accurate, and the most worthy to be retained as the standard of divine truth?—The translation, we own with pleasure, is in the main a good one; as good perhaps as most, taking the whole together.—But may it not be made still better, with some care, and with little or no inconvenience? And would it not be better for the Church of God, to have his word translated with as much exactness as may be; joined at the same time with such a just freedom in translating, as would best express the sense, and best comport with the design of the original?

How incongruous soever it is in fact, and how little soever we seem to regard it, yet doth it highly deserve our rational notice, and withal our most serious

rious concern, to think, that in the instance we have now mentioned, we deal with no book as we do with our *Bible*. Since the improvement of our language, and the refinement of our taste in literature, we see what just and beautiful versions are bestowed on other books of antiquity ;— the sense of the authors exprest with the greatest clearness ; their spirit and genius with the greatest force ; and their matter and subject adorned with all the elegance and grandeur, that our language will afford.— Our *sacred* books alone, the most ancient and most valuable of any, are not allowed this reasonable favor ; nor indeed have even common justice done them, tho' they so loudly demand it, and the times make it so absolutely necessary they should have it.— The remark is obvious, and is at the same time afflicting to men of sense ; who have no less frequently than justly complained of the want of a new translation (β). Which it is earnestly wisht by all sincere friends to the Christian cause, may at length be vouchsafed us by public authority.

And

(β) What we have suggested under this head, is abundantly supported by numerous and just observations occurring in almost all sorts of writers ; some occasionally handling particular passages, others professedly treating upon the whole subject. Thus all our best commentators and most judicious criticks to a man : All our ablest defenders of the Christian religion against the attempts made by modern unbelievers upon any parts of Scripture ; who taking our common translation at disadvantage, have made a handle of it to expose our religion to contempt, and to fix upon it blemishes, which in the original have no foundation, and for which a just translation would leave no room.

Besides the several very pertinent remarks, that occur in almost all the best answers, that have been given, to unbelievers, see Dr. *Rob. Gell's* essay towards the amendment of the last English translation of the Bible, 1659 fol. *Ostervald's* causes of corruption &c. p. 476. *Boyle's* Life by *Birch*, p. 96, - 101. Bp. *Hutchinson's* remark in Dr. *Young's* Historical dissertation, Vol. 2. p. 37. Archdeacon *Law's* considerations, p. 250, 251. *Howell's* Hist. of the Bible, *passim* ; particularly vol. 3. p. 192. Note (s.) 201, N. (r.) 204, N. (w.)

And whenever this great and good work shall be undertaken (for which there seems now to be an ample apparatus provided, and more will undoubtedly be supplied from all parts of the nation) we presume we need not observe to men of learning and judgment, who shall engage in it, how very useful it will be; and in what advantageous light it will place the sacred books, if it shall be thought fit to range some of them in more exact order than they are in at present; according as the connection of the several parts, and the nature and design of the several subjects, shall require.—The historical books, for instance, might, we think, be placed with more exactness according to order of time; and being ranked under proper classes, and thrown into commodious divisions; might be reduced into one regular and well compacted narrative, as other histories are, that are intended to be useful to the public. And altho' such a proposal as this may ap-

218, N. (g.) 226, N. (m.) 289, N. (m.) &c. &c. *Johnson on Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks*, p. 328, 350, 351, 371, 373, 375. *Arnold's preface to his Commentary on the Book of Wisdom*, p. 8. Specimen of a new Translation of the Psalms, 1733. *Kennicott's dissert.* p. 1; 103, &c. 125, 126, 177; 197; &c. *Alto Blackwall's* general preface to vol. 2. of his *sacred Classics*; where he proposes to shew 'the necessity and usefulness of a new version of the sacred Books.' And in p. 21 hath these words: *A new translation can give no offence to people of sound judgment and consideration; because every body conversant in these, and unprejudiced, must acknowledge, that there was less occasion to change the old version into the present, than there is to change the present into a new one.* But, above all, the *Essay for a new translation of the Bible*; which we wish may be attended with as much success in English, as we hear that of Mr. Le Cene was in French; viz. *Projet d'une nouvelle version Françoise de la Bible.*

And with respect to the several translations and reviews we have already had, it may be of some use to survey the account given of them by Mr. Lewis in his *hist. of those translations*, &c. See the restraints complained of by Dr. Gell, *ibid.* p. 333. Which seem to have some foundation, tho' that learned Historian is pleased to throw a small slur upon the Doctor's memory.

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appear somewhat uncommon, and perhaps also unwarrantable (γ) to those, who have not sufficiently considered the subject; yet it is certainly very warrantable in itself, and, if well executed, will without question do great justice to the scriptures; which, for want of such a regulation, do now appear in a more disadvantageous light, and are less clear and instructive, than they would otherwise be, to the generality of readers. However, we do but propose the matter, submitting it intirely to the judgment of those, who shall be pleased to consider about it, and referring them for a fuller enlargement on this head (tho' drawn up with a different view at first) to the learned Dr. *Lightfoot* (δ).

We would beg leave to offer another observation, which, if approved of, will we hope be equally serviceable to the Public, and do no less honor to the Bible, if ever it should be new-translated. And that is, that it seems extremely proper, that the whole

(γ) It can be no more unwarrantable to reduce *Scripture-history*, than it can be to reduce *Scripture-doctrine*, and *Scripture-precepts*, into one view; as Bp. *Gastrel*, Dr. *Stevenson*, and others have excellently done. Nor hath any offence, that we know of, been taken at any of the numerous *Scripture histories* we have extant in our language: nay many of them have been highly applauded, tho' almost all of them have been penned in words different from those of *Scripture*, but still expressing the sense. If so, can we justly expect any offence at all will be taken, when the history of *Scripture* is set forth, and that by public authority, in its own words? and when no other liberty is taken by that authority, in respect to the management of order and connection, than hath been taken before, and very justly, by all the private writers, who have attempted to reduce such history into one uniform and compendious view?—Our fears and jealousies about such matters are too often without sufficient ground. And experience shews, that the interposal of learned authority, upon just and necessary occasions, easily sways the judgment, and over-rules the prejudice of most men.

(δ) *Genuine remain*; tract 1. See also *Hor. Hebr.* on *S. Matth.* xxvii. 9.

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translation should be reduced into some more convenient sections and paragraphs, than our present Chapters and Verses (ε) : Which far from being the most

(1) 'The ill contrived and awkward divisions in our printed books, interrupt and break the sacred style, &c. They equally blemish and deform single sentences, and mangle small periods and sections, and break off and spoil the force and connection of larger sections, or assemblage and union of several periods called chapters.' *Blackwall's sacred classics*, vol. 2. pref. p. 15. See also Mr. *Locke's* essay before his comments and paraphrase on *St. Paul's epistles*: *Lewis's* hist. of the translations, ch. 5. *Casaubon's* notes on the Evangelists, *sub init.* And for the present take only a few samples, out of great numbers, of the improper division of our chapters only, laying nothing now of our verses, tho' the division of them also, in numberless instances, be no less faulty. — *Eccles.* xii. 1. Look back to the two last verses of the foregoing chapter. There seem to be more instances of such wrong division in this interlocutory book, as also in that of *Job*, and almost throughout the Prophets. For a specimen we shall point out one in *Isaiab* only, chap. liii. 1. Here compare the three last verses of the chapter immediately preceding. — In the New Testament, instances occur at almost every turn. We must content ourselves with pointing only to a few. Thus *Act.* viii. 1. where the first words, *And Saul was consenting to his death*, are most evidently forced away from the former chapter, which they ought to have concluded, and which several ancient MSS. copies do conclude with those very words. — *Chap.* xvi. seems to begin a little too abruptly. Might it not have taken its rise much more commodiously at ver. 36. of the foregoing chapter? The xviiiith seems to open properly enough, considering the book is one continued piece of history; and it is but seldom indeed that we can find proper resting places in such a work. — *Chap.* xxi. 40. we shall pass over here, as we shall probably have occasion to take notice of it in another place. — The Epistle to the *Romans*, being almost one entire thread of argument throughout, affords too many instances of wrong division, which are visible to every eye upon bare turning over the leaves. Thus *Chap.* ii. iii. iv. v. vi. viii. xi. xv. &c. The like may be seen in all the Epistles, and in almost every chapter of every Epistle; more especially that to the *Hebrews*, which is full of strong and close reasoning from beginning to end.

It must be confessed after all, that it is not the most easy task in the world to make the divisions every where in the most proper manner. It requires a good judgment, with a comprehen-

most commodious method of parcelling out the Scriptures for common use, is perhaps the most incommodious of any; and being done in a darker age of the Church (ζ), wherein the scope and connection were not so rightly discerned, will easily allow us room, without giving any just offence, to make proper improvements upon the method received. And such improvements would undoubtedly give beauty and energy to the translation, and remove abundance of incongruities, which are now too justly objected, for the want of such improvements.——Many learned and judicious moderns (to whom we need not here refer) have given us valuable specimens of this kind in some of their writings; and have thereby paved the way for the more easy introducing of such divisions, as we propose, by public authority.

If we shall not presume too far, we cannot but express our wish, that, instead of the common *contents* prefixed to our present chapters (and which, with submission, are far from being drawn up with due accuracy) we had just and exact arguments

five view of the whole design of each book, and of the connection of its several parts. And what if it does? It is the happiness of our age and country, that we abound with men thus qualified. And from them we may expect a more accurate performance in every part of the review proposed.

(ζ) *Viz.* Towards the middle of the 13th century, by one *Hugo*, a Cardinal. If the Christian Church, for so many preceding centuries, had no divisions of this kind (some few excepted) no man of sense can think those we now have, to be essential to the Bible, and therefore upon no account to be altered. Our *Ranters*, about a century ago, ran wild against these divisions. But we proceed upon a different footing, and with a milder temper. Some divisions there should be; but some, that should be better contrived, than those we have at present. This is all our meaning.

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placed before each division, upon the plan now proposed (4). Which, with proper reflections and improvements subjoined to every such division, would certainly be of great use; as it would make the reading of the Scriptures, both in the congregation and in private, more easy, more delightful, and more instructive to our people. And if here and there, as occasion shall require, a few, plain and short notes (5) shall be thought proper to be added,

to

(4) The celebrated Mr. *Osterwald* hath presented the world with an admirable specimen on this subject, in his *Arguments and Observations on the books and chapters of the O. and N. Testament*, which he drew up for the service of the church at *Neuchâtel*, and were afterwards so well approved by our *Society for promoting Christian knowledge*, that they procured them to be translated into *English*, and printed the translation at their own expence. — See the Author's *Preface to the Arguments, &c.* shewing the first occasion of his writing them. Nor have we been without some useful and judicious attempts of this kind in our own language: See the very worthy Bishop of *Sodor and Man's short observations for reading with more profit the historical Books of the Old Testament*.

(5) We have observed the notes to our old translation of *Q. Elizabeth* (poor, jejune, confused and unsatisfactory, as they often are) to be very acceptable to many of our people, who have no better to help them to understand the Scriptures. — If these, done chiefly by foreigners, and accompanying a translation out of date, are so welcome and pleasing for want of better; how much more so would notes be, done by more masterly hands of our own, and subjoined to a new and better translation? — Our learned countryman Dr. *Trapp* hath begun a very valuable work in this way, in his *explanatory notes on the Gospels*, designed chiefly for the unlearned. A pious, judicious, and charitable attempt, and all within narrow compass; tho' the Notes we propose should be very few, and those only such as are most wanted. — The authors of our present version thought it proper to add some notes, tho' there are very few of them, that are really useful. Most, especially in the N. T. relate to the value of ancient coin; as on *Matth.* xviii. 24, 28. *Mar.* vi. 8. *Luke* xv. 8. &c. Others to various readings; as *Matth.* xxvi. 26. *Luke* x. 22. *Acts* xxv. 6. Others to a reading, that may seem either more probable, or at least equally so with that, which is now received; as *Acts* xiii. 38. Some to defects or omissions in certain copies; as *Luke* xvii. 36. Some to the original import of a word or phrase; as *Mark* xiii.

8. *Acts*

to explain the more difficult passages, or reconcile seeming inconsistencies, &c. the benefit will be inconceivable; and our countrymen will no longer have reason to complain (as they now seem to do) that the Bible in so many places is a very obscure book, and contains so many *things hard to be understood*. Which as it discourages some from reading, so doth it put others upon cavilling; and the divine Book suffers by means of both. However such a free and just translation, as hath been proposed, will in great measure supersede the use of notes; as may partly be seen by consulting some of the best foreign translations (¹); which yet are none of them so perfect, as we could wish: And, after all, a few proper notes on some particular passages may be not only useful, but necessary.

We are sufficiently sensible, that what we have proposed under this first article of our *Disquisitions*, will not be very agreeable to persons of narrow minds. For such do seldom extend their thoughts or desires beyond the present state of things, contenting themselves with taking matters as they find them, and

8. *AA* xiii. 35. Some, that are explanatory of an eastern dicti-
on; as *Ezra* ix. 8. And some again, that give the meaning of a
word set down according to what it is in the original, untranslated;
as *Gen.* xxxi. 47, 49. All which shew, that the translators judged
notes not to be unnecessary; and consequently that our proposal
is at least excuseable.

(¹) See more especially the famous *German* translation by *Luther*, printed at *Weimars*, with Notes. Which is perhaps the
freest, and (allowing for any involuntary oversights, or misapprehen-
sions of the original meaning) makes the sacred books the most
intelligible, of any modern translation. Some late *French* trans-
lations, of particular parts of Scripture, have improved upon
former ones in this respect. And within these few years, we
have had several approved specimens of the same kind in *English*.
All which are seasonable preparatives to the great design recom-
mended.

scarce having patience enough to hear of any proposals for emendations and improvements. From men of this low and contracted way of thinking, we can expect little else but unfriendly censure. But from those, who are more liberal, learned, and intelligent, we may hope for a more favorable judgment. For they know, that endeavors should be used to bring things by degrees to a more perfect state. And they can plainly discern, tho' their judgment should differ from ours in some particulars, that our views nevertheless are benevolent; kindly intended for the good of mankind, and directed to the great end of advancing Christianity.

If any difficulty should now occur in relation to any thing, that has been proposed in this section, we shall only desire, that it may be thoroughly considered, before it shall be concluded unsurmountable. We are very well perswaded, that most difficulties will vanish upon an attentive examination. That relating to a new *division* may perhaps be one of the greatest: But the proper method of removing even that, seems so very obvious, that it cannot long escape the attention of any, who will consider; especially since there are so many specimens already extant, which shew, that the thing has been attempted with success, and without interfering with the design of our present references.—The greatest difficulty of all, as we apprehend, is, to get us heartily to engage in these noble undertakings, and to shew as much resolution as inclination to execute them. Which, whensoever such a spirit shall appear among us, we may venture to foretel, will be attended with far greater success, than our misgiving apprehensions will now allow us to imagine. For supposed difficulties, which, when viewed at a distance, appear great, will gradually lessen upon a nearer approach,

approach, and give way to steady resolution, joined with discreet management.

But supposing, after all, that a new translation of the Bible, with the other things we have been recommending, should really appear impracticable on some accounts at present; and that, on such considerations, we should even give up these points, tho' still convinced they are of very high importance to religion; yet conceiving a favorable opinion of the good sense of the public, we cannot suppose, that any argument will be drawn from hence to the prejudice of our subsequent proposals; or that they will not be allowed a fair hearing, merely because what we have here proposed, may appear to some to be very difficult to execute. For if our other proposals (suppose ever so few) shall appear more feasible, may we not justly hope from the candor, zeal, and abilities of men of learning, that something will be done in relation to some or other of these proposals? — We trust there is a nobler and better spirit in the present age than was in the past; and that reason and truth will be more calmly attended to, than has hitherto been usual, upon every subject of importance.

Having offered all that we think necessary or proper, relating to this first general head, we go on to another.

S E C T. II.

Queries and Observations relating to the design and composition of our public Service, taken in general.

NEXT after the Bible, our principal concern shall be with our valuable *Liturgy*; which we believe may, and hope will, be rendered still more valuable, by proper emendations: And such emendations we shall, with the greatest deference, submit to the wisdom and piety of our Governors; only proposing our own thoughts on the subject.

1. May not the *length* of our public service (especially on Sunday-mornings) be in some reasonable measure contracted? And will it not, on many accounts, be expedient to contract it? especially considering the indevotion and coolness of the present age; which we have reason to think the length of our service does not contribute to lessen. And there are some seasons of the year, which may render that length incommodious to many, even of those, who are the best disposed among us, and the best affected to our form of worship. Who therefore on repeted occasions have been observed to express their wish, that our morning service on Sundays were reduced within more reasonable bounds; adding, that they had just reason to believe, that both services would then not only be more frequented, but performed with greater devotion. ——— And if we should further say, that the

the length of our service may sometimes be the accidental occasion of too much hurrying, if not also of curtailings, in the common course of reading it (both which have often been complained of) we hope we have a fair title to pardon, both from those, who would keep up the solemnity of our worship, and those, who, on such an occasion, do unhappily, we say not wilfully, degrade it.

And here the case of aged or infirm Ministers upon poor benefices ought to be considered with tenderness; which yet we do not find the law hath done on this occasion. There are many, who are neither able to maintain an Assistant, nor yet to go thro' the duty without one. They may also perhaps have more than one church to supply; and their strength having been wasted with the duty done in the first, they are oftentimes scarce able to do it in a second; and yet may possibly have also a third to serve, and that in the shortest and severest days of winter. And sometimes the distance between the several churches under their care may be very considerable; as may also the distance between those of several neighbouring fellow-laborers, who cannot therefore be in a capacity to give them any assistance in their distress. — What must such poor unhappy Clergimen do in this case? Must they resign? That would probably ruin both them, and their poor families, if they have any. Should they shorten the offices? (and it must be remembered, that they often have occasional as well as the stated offices to go thro' with;) That is not allowed by law, and is forbidden by rubric confirmed by law? — Does not every one then see, that the case of such Ministers is very deplorable? And ought there not to be some allowance made in favour of *such* at least? The reducing our public service within a
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more reasonable compass, by public authority, would give some relief. And till this is done, it is not to be expected, that our service will every where, and by all Clergimen, be performed in the manner it ought to be.

It is also to be considered, and therewithal to be lamented, that over and above the length of the usual service, as ordinarily enjoined, the Ministers of our Church sometimes find themselves obliged to lengthen out that service to a very unmeet proportion, not only by taking in the occasional offices (*) above-mentioned, more or fewer as cases may require ; but also by reading acts of Parliament, proclamations, banns, briefs, citations, articles and canons of the Church, declarations after induction, letters or orders from the Bishop, publishing excommunications, executing the injunctions of public penance, &c. divers of which, as it may happen, may fall in at the same time, and require to be done on the same day.

We hope some methods may be found, whereby these inconveniences may be removed, without causing greater. And truly we cannot well apprehend

(*) But besides these occasional offices (which may happen every Sunday throughout the year) the solemn *festivals of the State* do sometimes fall upon that day ; and when they do, the service for each of them being of an unusual length, the inconvenience complained of is apparently increased. And not only so, but another is also added. For it is observable, that when such a concurrence happens, there is (as we may shew hereafter) an uncommon intermixture of services, which no way tend to do honor to our Liturgy. The rules likewise, that are given us to go by in this case, are sometimes more apt to perplex than direct : Nor are our commentators always of sufficient service to clear them. And if, in one instance, where the established rubric and the command of the State most certainly clash, we should attempt to observe both ; we should find a punctual observance would expose us to as much censure and inconvenience on the one hand, as a total neglect would on the other.

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how greater can be caused by just and legal relaxations, in a case where they are so very much wanted. If we have mistaken the case, and upon that mistake have misrepresented it, it is easy to set us right, by shewing, that we are wrong. And we shall with all readiness submit to better information.

2. Is it necessary or expedient, all things considered, that the *three services* ordinarily appointed for Sundays and Holidays in the morning (λ), should continue distinct, and yet be used, as if they were but one?— Might not the substance of the three be contracted into one; and so the whole not only made shorter, but thereby rendred the more agreeable, and perhaps, in consequence, the more improving to our congregations?

There seem to be *repetitions* enjoined, which may not be altogether necessary, and, so far as we can judge, may as well be avoided. Those repetitions (whether necessary or not) are plainly owing to the enjoining of several different services to be used at one and the same time, or during the same continued solemnity of worship. And if it often happens (as it often does) that other occasional offices do multiply the repetitions; do those repetitions add to the beauty, as they do to the length of our service? Which repetitions, whether it be indeed agreeable to right reason, to the main end and design of our religion, or to the rule and observation of its blessed Author, to continue in his Church, is left to those, who have the government of it, to consider.

(λ) It is observable, that the *afternoon* service even on Sundays, like that for every ordinary day in the week, is one intire and compact piece. Nor is it easy to see, why the morning service on that festival should not be alike compact and intire. But this will be considered further in an ensuing *dissertation*.

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We presume the giving a few instances here will be no way improper, and may serve to illustrate, as well as justify, our Queries.

(1) It has been observed concerning the *Lord's Prayer* in particular, that it is enjoined to be publicly used every Lord's Day in our ordinary service, when there is no communion, no less than seven times viz. five times in the morning, and twice in the afternoon. When there is a communion, and also afternoon-sermon or lecture, then nine times. If the office of infant-baptism (to say nothing of that of adults) and the other of churching of women, happen to come in, as they may and do sometimes, both morning and afternoon; then thirteen times. And supposing those of matrimony and burial superadded, (besides which, the second lesson (μ) may also happen to introduce it)——but it may be time to stop.——We shall make no severe remarks, as some have done; only desiring, that common reason and moderation may be deemed sufficient; and that we do not overcharge our worship, even with the very best of formularies. This is all we ask: Let men of understanding consider.

Further reflections upon the foregoing article, viz. the frequent repetition of the Lord's Prayer.

WE could very well have excused ourselves from adding any thing on this head, if we did not call to mind the great stress, that has often been laid upon this argument; and how much has been said by learned men to defend a practice, for which the un-

(μ) The second Lesson introduces the Lord's-prayer, Jan. 8, Feb. 23, May 8, June 28, Sept. 5, Oct. 25.

learned,

learned, left to their own native sense and common understanding, would probably have seen but little reason.

What we have to say, we think proper to throw into a discourse by itself; so that whosoever is already satisfied, and desires no farther conviction in so plain a case, may pass it over, and proceed directly to the article immediately subjoined to it. The discourse itself, for distinction, shall be exhibited in a different character.

We shall not concern ourselves to inquire, what deference may be due to the authority of learned men, asserting any point, in which we may see reason to differ from them (for this is intended to be considered hereafter, in a more proper place;) but with respect to the reasons, which are commonly urged by such persons in favor of our repeting this admirable prayer, let us be permitted to say, without offence, that they seem far less satisfactory, than one could wish, to those, who will consider with due attention. They are to be met with, some or other of them, in almost all our ritualists, and other writers on the Liturgy. We have considered each of them, we hope, with sufficient fairness and impartiality; and see reason still to wish, there were better given. The observation we make upon them in general, is only this; that since something must be said for every practice we adhere and have been brought up to, ingenious men will seldom be at a loss to say something, that is plausible; tho' some, who are less happy in their talents, have, we think, egregiously failed even in this. Now speaking freely, and yet candidly; — when we can prevail with ourselves to lay aside all prejudice on this head, would it not seem more rational and ingenuous, if we find we can give no better reasons, to own frankly, that we have no better to give; and that the true reason for
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our using so many repetitions as we do, is the determination of the Church? (v) We doubt not, but if the Church had thought fit to enjoin twice as many repetitions of this excellent prayer, we should readily have found a variety of reasons, to shew, why she enjoined every one of them; and being so frequently attacked as we are upon this article, we should seem indefensible, if we could give none; which we and others would justly reckon a disgrace to us.—But after all, this will not satisfy fair inquirers, even those of our own communion. For such men desire to see just and solid reasons, for every thing we do in the public worship of God. And the best they can yet see in this case, are the Church's injunctions; to which they are willing to pay all dutiful obedience in every case; only taking care to do nothing, that their conscience apprehends to be sinful in any. As to which every man must be supposed to be himself the best judge; nor should the rule of any other man's conscience be a criterion or directory to his.

Now, upon looking back, let us be indulged the liberty to declare our own minds freely with regard to this best of prayers, and the pattern of all the best we can offer.—We think it is highly proper, and every way becoming us as disciples of our Lord, to make it a part of all our solemn devotions. But then this seems to be

(.) In some other cases it appears, that the Church is for avoiding repetitions. Thus with regard to several of the *hymns* taken out of the psalms and other parts of Scripture, and appointed to be read in the ordinary course. In respect of which, you will find, that due provision is made by the rubrics to prevent their being repeated twice on the same day. We may also take notice, that one of the rubrics in the office for ordaining of Priests, as it stood in the old Common-prayer, had this clause; *It shall suffice the Litany to be said once.* Now may we not ask, whether it might not also suffice, that the *Lord's-prayer* should be said but once? One short and expressive rubric would determine the matter, so as to prevent all unnecessary repetitions, tho' we had ever so many different offices to go through with at one time.

no just reason, why we should ever and anon be repeating it, even in those devotions. For when we are engaged in one only course, or continued exercise of worship, during one assembly; might not one only oblation of this divine address be judged sufficient for that single intercourse?

The practice of the primitive Christians, one would humbly imagine, might very well content us, without giving offence either to God or man. And yet we do not find with any certainty of evidence, that they used this prayer more than once at any one conjuncture of worship. The account they give us, with respect to their ordinary devotions in public, is this: *Præmissâ legitimâ & ordinariâ oratione* (meaning the Lord's prayer) *quasi fundamento*,—*jus est superstruendi extrinsecus petitiones* (ξ). From whence altho' we are not to conclude, that they always begun with this prayer (for we know, that they sometimes begun with some other acts of piety;) yet may we well judge from hence, that they lookt upon this as a proper initiatory to all their prayers; and that when they thought fit to premise it to their devotions on any occasion, they usually proceeded upon the plan of it, in the matter and method of those devotions; esteeming it the best model to regulate them by, in respect of both. And tho' it is probable, if not certain, that they performed no solemn office without this prayer; yet since they appropriated it peculiarly to the faithful (ο), and permitted none but baptized persons and communicants to join in it, it would seem the repetitions of it, if any, were less frequent in their solemnities than in ours. What we know with any certainty of the matter, is this; that they con-

(ξ) *Tertull. de orat. c. 9.*

(ο) For which reason it was called *ἡ ἐκκλησιαστικὴ*, the prayer of the faithful.

stantly used this prayer at the celebration of the Lord's supper, which was every Lord's day; and at the administration of baptism, which was at one solemn and stated season of the year; and that when they made it a part of either of these, or of any other solemn office of worship, the office was performed solemnly and separately as one, and at a time peculiarly set apart for it as such. So that tho' it should be allowed, as it must, that the antients used the Lord's prayer frequently (and we know, that they did so in private, as well as in public) yet doth it not appear to us, that they used it in the same manner, and with the same frequency, that we do in the latter respect. And even supposing they did with still greater frequency, which no one, we presume, will attempt to prove; yet their practice being no law to us, we are not obliged to abide by it. Nor need we indeed be at all solicitous about their practice upon the whole, so long as we have reason and the Gospel to direct us. For these, after all, are our best guides. And if the ancients have at any time varied from these, we may presume ourselves to be at just liberty to vary from the ancients. And we have more than reason to think, that the paying too implicit a regard to the writings of some of them, especially those of the latter centuries, hath been the occasion of leading too many, in all succeeding centuries, into mistake. — We respect the most ancient writers of the christian Church, and look upon all the best of their writings as invaluable: but we do not, for all this, look upon any of them as infallible. We reverence their customs, and above all, their manners: But the Gospel is still our rule in judging of both.

These free observations, relating to the frequent repetition of the divine prayer in our offices, will, we hope, be received with the same candor, with which we offer them. And if any shall be inclined to bestow any
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free remarks upon them, we can no way take it amiss, provided they shall be made with as much friendliness as freedom ; and that as much regard shall be paid to common sense and reason, as to common practice and antiquity.

(2) As to the *Gloria Patri*, more perhaps may be said in behalf of the frequent repetition of it ; tho' even that comes in commonly, and most usually, seven or eight times ; not unfrequently nine or ten ; and may also be introduced eleven times, in the course of our morning service only ; besides the occasional offices, that may happen to intervene during that course.

Many other particulars might be mentioned, which are generally thought to be repeated much oftner than is needful. But we chuse to point out no more here, and may occasionally touch upon some of them, as they may happen to fall in our way hereafter. In the mean time we think it proper to tender a gentle admonition to contending parties on this subject.

Those, who take the liberty to divide from our establishment, have sometimes observed to us, that their repetitions, when they inadvertently make any, need not be objected to by those, who make more. We presume not to judge, which side is most liberal in a thing, that, if wrong, may be avoided by each, without discredit to either, in the use of a stated and well-framed Liturgy.

And when they object to us the too frequent (and, as they say, not always well-applied) repetitions of the divine attributes at the beginning, and
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of our Blessed Lord's merits (tho' in themselves always just) at the conclusion of such short prayers as we use; as well as the want of regular method and connection in several, and our reiterating the same requests in others; it is some comfort to think, that we have it in our power (at least our Governors have) to take off these objections, by removing the grounds of them: Which can only be done by revising our Liturgy, and bringing it to due symmetry, and just completeness. Till then it may seem adviseable and Christian-like in the contending parties, to forbear obloquies, and quietly permit each other to worship God according to their different sentiments, and the sincerity of their respective consciences; for which they are each of them accountable to him alone, and to none else. And we doubt not, but the great and wise Searcher of hearts will make many fair allowances to each of us, where we make none to one another; and that he will acquit and justify, where we too often condemn and vilify. Such is the goodness of God, and such our weakness!

S E C T.

S E C T. III.

An occasional Dissertation, containing a short inquiry, Whether our first Service, as distinct from, and independent on the other two, may not be ordinarily sufficient for our stated Mattins, or morning worship on Sundays.

WHEN we say *ordinarily sufficient*, it is to prevent mistakes. For when the holy communion is to be celebrated, the *communion-office* ought undoubtedly to be read. And we sincerely wish, that, according to the first intention of our Compilers (π), this essential part of Christian worship was duly performed in all our churches every Sunday throughout the year. But until this primitive and godly practice be restored again, which is much to be wished, it may seem neither necessary, nor yet expedient, that the office should be used, when the act is wanting; since this hath given a handle for reproaches, as if we made a shew of having a communion, when we have none; or would be thought every Sunday to be ready to enter upon the administration, without any design of doing it (ρ).

(π) See *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum*. Tit. de divinis officiis, c. 3. and 7. K. Edw. 6. Injunctions, 1547. Q. Eliz. Injunctions, 1559. Preface to the *Homilies*, 1562. See also Bp. *Cosin's* notes on the communion-office, in Dr. *Nichols's* appendix, p. 54. Bp. *Patrick* on frequent communion, Disc. 2. Sect. 5. Bp. *Wettenhal's* weekly communicating, p. 34, &c. 46, &c. See also his Introduction to part 2d. Bp. *Beveridge* on frequent communion, p. 38. *Bingham's* Eccles. Antiq. B. 15. c. 9. Sect. 7. *Wheatly* on Com. pr. ch. 6. Sect. 30. p. 325. and the 13th Canon of our Church may likewise be proper to be considered.

(ρ) It has for this reason been called by some, a *mock-communion*.

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But whenever we really purpose to set about and execute this holy action on any Sundays or other festivals, it is our humble wish we might all agree to go back to the rule and intent of our ancestors, performing it at a distinct time, as we have a distinct office provided by them for this purpose.

As for the *Litany*, which claims a place between the first and third service, might it not, ordinarily at least, be omitted on Sundays, and be appropriated, as it chiefly was at first, to Wednesdays and Fridays, and days of extraordinary humiliation ?

And in respect to any *occasional offices*, that may demand an interposal, may they not be more properly postponed than interposed?—Thus, for instance ; the office commonly called *the churching of women*, (which, by the way, we have no rubric to direct us where it should come in, and perhaps have some reason to desire one ;) may not this, or any other the like office, that is usually introduced in the midst of divine service, be postponed to the close of it ; and then be performed either immediately before, or immediately after the Sermon ? Where would be the incongruity ? Or would it not (if any) be rather less than the common one ? Bp. *Cosin* seems very right on one account, in thinking, that this office should come in immediately after the Litany (σ). But on another, as things are now ordered, it may seem inconvenient. For how speedy would be the transition from the Lord's prayer in this office, to that at the entrance of the communion office ? The reiteration would be made almost in a breath. But this was not the Bishop's meaning. For his Lordship hath more than once remonstrated against what he calls *buddling* of the offices.

(σ) Dr. *Nichols's* additional notes on this office. Of the same kind was Mr. *Wheatly*, in *loc.* p. 525.

The making convenient regulations in this regard, so as to seclude all improprieties from the worship of God, belongs only to those, who have the prime care of his Church. Whether it shall please them, either now or at any time hereafter, to make such regulations, must be submitted to themselves. In the mean time it cannot, we hope, be deemed unreasonable, or an unbecoming liberty in us, if we presume to inquire, as we proposed, ' Whether our first morning-service on Sunday may not ordinarily be sufficient for one stated service on that day, and on that part of it, without the addition of any other ? '

If our first service be of itself a complete one, or competently and ordinarily so, without the addition of the other two ; we presume there can be no difficulty in allowing, that it may be ordinarily sufficient for all the more general purposes of Christian worship (τ).

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(τ) We do not mean, that this service is already so complete, as that it wants no improvements. Many valuable ones might undoubtedly be made in it, which need not be pointed out. And if ever it shall be thought better, that we should have but one service, instead of three, at one time ; there is no question but this service will be made sufficiently complete, so as to answer every reasonable purpose, which the enjoining of three can be designed for.

In the mean time, what has been suggested by an excellent person, to whom these papers have been communicated, may deserve notice. I think, says he, with the authors of these proposals, that the first Service may, by proper improvements, be made a very complete one, so as to answer all the ordinary purposes of worship. And when such an undertaking shall be set on foot, I could wish the sermon, instead of having its place towards the conclusion of the service, might be appointed to come in immediately after the second lesson, or else the hymn or creed that follow it : and that, generally speaking, it were a practical comment or exposition upon some of the Scriptures, that had been read.

To judge the better of this, let us consider what are the several parts, whereof this worship consists.

All Christian worship, we think, consists of prayer and praise offered up to God in the name of the Mediator; and both usually attended with instructions in his will, and from his word.

Now we think we have each of these parts of worship in our *first* service.

First for *prayer*. This consists of adoration, confession, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving; particular occasions being supposed to be comprised under any or each of them, as circumstances may require.

1. *Adoration or address*.—All our prayers begin with this, tho' expressed in a brief and concise manner. Nor would it be suitable to dwell long on an address, or to expatiate upon the divine attributes, in prayers like ours, so short, so many, and for the most part so comprehensive.—Much might be said, and a great deal hath been justly said, in favour of such short prayers; tho' nothing ought to be said, by way of reprisals, in derogation of any longer ones; provided they comprehend every thing

My reason for wishing, that this piece of instruction might be introduced somewhere about the middle of the service, and before our entering on the larger part of our devotions, is this; because an application of this kind naturally prepares the heart for devotion, by enlarging our understandings, elevating our thoughts, warming our affections, and fixing our attention, &c. And I may add, that by taking this method, we may happily engage many persons to join with us in our subsequent prayers, who now come to church only for the sermon, and when that is ended, have nothing more to detain them there,

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that is necessary, take in nothing that is improper, and are throughout regular and uniform. Now this, we think, is best provided for in a stated Liturgy; which in this respect must needs have the advantage of all other methods of devotion. —But this only by the way, and to remove, in some measure, a blame too frequently charged upon our short addressess.

2. *Confession of sins.* — You have this in the general confession; as also very pertinent exhortations before it (partly delivered in the words of scripture, and partly in the words of the Church;) together with a declaration after it relating to the terms of pardon, pronounced in the words of the *absolution*.

3. *Petition.* We have also very proper petitions, as in several other passages, so particularly in our two collects, the one for peace, the other for grace. That, which is called the first collect, and which sometimes contains a repetition, in substance of what we had asked before, is not properly and originally a part of this service, but is borrowed from the third; and therefore if the Church should so think fit, might be remitted wholly and only to that; which seems to be its only proper place. And of this mind was the learned Bp. *Cosin* (v): whose judgment and direction, if we were allowed to follow it, would prevent at least one needless repetition.

4. *Intercession and supplication.* The prayer for all conditions of men answers this purpose, in a more general manner; with a particular petition

(v) See *Nichols's* append. sect. 27. p. 68.

included for persons under affliction. And the prayer for the King, that for the Royal Family, and the other for the Clergy and People, include, on the whole, men of all ranks and conditions in life, for whom we ought to intercede at the throne of grace. —What need have we then of any more on this head, except on some particular occasions? And we are provided, for the most part, with such, as will answer those occasions; tho' they will not answer all, as very few prayers will, or can well be contrived to do. Which, by the way, favours another argument we may have occasion hereafter to bring in view.

5. *Thanksgiving.* Is not our form of general thanksgiving every way suitable to this purpose, and comprehensive of every act of gratitude to God, in a general way, so far as it goes? — If indeed we desire to descend further into particulars, more of them might perhaps be specified. Nor would some few more, we suppose, be improper. But the form, in the main, is excellent, and one of the most valuable in our Liturgy.

Some *more* occasional prayers, it is generally confessed, are wanted; as we shall see hereafter. But as to our ordinary and daily service, considered as such, it is complete without them. Because it takes in all ordinary occasions. Which is all we are here concerned to prove.

Lastly, there is no need of proving, that all our prayers in this service are offered up in the name of our Mediator. For the prayers themselves plainly shew it.

II. We proceed next to the article of *Praise*. See our Hymns; and remember likewise (what hath before been taken notice of) our general thanksgiving;

giving ; with our thanksgivings also on particular occasions.

Under this article may be comprehended *Psalmody* ; which is undoubtedly a part of Christian worship. Now tho' we cannot say, that this is particularly directed by any of our rubrics (and in strict measures of law we cannot go further than they direct ;) yet since we cannot observe it is any where forbidden by them, it is surely allowable at the end, as well as before the beginning of this first service. And the directions of our Bishops, as well as common sense, and common charity, shew, that we are not in such cases to confine our rubrics to too narrow a meaning. We are however clear with respect to both the times we have mentioned ; and the title-page before our old version of the Psalms in metre informs us, that the collection was *set forth and allowed to be sung in all churches, before and after morning and evening prayer, as well as before and after sermons.*

III. *Instruction and exhortation.* We have this from the word of God, in our Psalms, Lessons and Hymns ; one (φ) whereof, delivered in the words of man, may seem little inferior to the words of Angels.

Is the word of God, of Angels, or of men, further required ? They may all be comprehended in the Sermon.— ‘ But the sermon is no part of the first ‘ service ’. No more is it of the second, or of the third ; tho' it is allowed by a rubric in the last. And may it not as well be allowed by a new rubric at the end of the first ? Nay, and what rubric forbids it there (the service being then over) if any Clergiman

(φ) *Te Deum.*

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hath

hath a mind to introduce it in that place, reading a homily at the third service? Or what rubric forbids a sermon even at the end of the Litany? we mean, when that office is ended, and before the third is begun. So that whereas some have, perhaps with too much reason, in particular places, complained of the want of preaching in our Church, we see here we may have it in our Church, perhaps in too great abundance, if the liberty no-where denied us should every where be made use of.

But this only shews, that our services are in themselves distinct, and every one of them in and by itself complete. And being in themselves so, they ought in reason, and according to the design of the Church, to be kept so. Else we necessarily run into those tautologies, which we blame in others. Nor will our interposing a Psalm (x) or Hymn prevent it, tho' it may in some measure excuse it, or render the repetition less perceivable. For our act of worship is still a continued one. There is no breaking up of the assembly and departing, between any of the several services. Yet this only, in strictness, renders the services distinct. And this only was intended by our reformers to keep them so.

(x) In some country-churches, we are told, neither psalm nor hymn can be had even on *Sundays*, much less on holy-days and other days of prayer. So thin are the congregations, and so unskilled in singing! In such churches therefore the minister, how incongruous soever he may judge it, or how unable soever he may be to perform it, is obliged to go on with the services, without any intermission between either of them. So that in this case, that *intervention of psalmody*, so justly recommended by a wise and good Prelate, in order to prevent the *transitions from one service to another being too sudden and abrupt*, cannot be observed. Bp. Gibson's Charges, 1717, and 1724.

And

And indeed considering the various avocations of life, which, even on our Christian sabbaths, keep many of our inferior people from attending at particular hours ; and also, considering the singular advantages of short and frequent acts of worship, at different intervals ; it may still seem best on the whole, that we should either return to the first intention and direction of our Church, or content ourselves with our first service only in the morning, on Sundays ; making that as complete as possible, in any instance or instances, wherein it is not already so.

There remain two or three things further to be taken notice of, in relation to the service we have been considering.

1. Is it necessary (as some think, and as we have no occasion now to inquire) that the Lord's-prayer should make a part of all our common devotions ? We have that prayer twice in this service.—But why have we it twice in one and the same service ? Perhaps *we* cannot tell, tho' others may. If for no other reason, yet possibly for this ; that this service, as it seems to us, consists of two parts ; the former ending with the Creed, the latter going on from thence. And here, tho' the interposition of the same prayer, doth not seem absolutely necessary ; yet since it is so ordered, we ought candidly to suppose, that this part of the service, which is altogether devotional, is in the intention of the Church, distinct from the foregoing, which consisted partly of devotions, and partly of other acts of worship. And this is all the reason (be it valid more or less) that we can offer, why the prayer of our Lord is here repeated. And we would suppose the reason to be the same for repeating it in the Communion-office ; the latter part of that office, which opens anew with this prayer, being usually styled the *post-communion*.

2. If

2. If it be necessary or expedient, in our public worship, to make profession of our common faith as Christians, we do this in our common Creed ; which is part of our first service ; and which, for this reason, may be needless to be repeated in any other. If in another there is a more particular and explicit creed, may not that creed, if it shall be so judged necessary, be introduced into this ? But then it may not be necessary to have two creeds in the same service ; one only may be deemed sufficient (↓). And one we have already, and a very good one ; tho' we have no exception against substituting the other in its room, if our Governors shall so think fit ; only the first is the more plain and intelligible. Which is a consideration of some moment, with respect, at least, to ordinary congregations.

3. If some should think it necessary that the Epistles and Gospels should be introduced, we have no objection, save only this ; that the two Lessons (together with the Psalms and Hymns) in this service, have superseded the necessity, tho' perhaps not the use of them.— And *why* are these epistles and gospels inserted in the third service ? Plainly for this reason, amongst others, because it is a distinct ser-

(↓) In a rubric before the Apostles creed at morning-service, it is provided, that the said creed shall not be read on *such days as the creed of S. Athanasius is appointed to be read*. The reason is, because this other creed is to supply the place of it. From whence it appears, that the Church judges one creed sufficient for one service. And since it is certain, that she never intended more than one service at one time, it seems to be no less so, that she never intended more than one creed at one time. So that our reciting of two, after the usual manner, during one assembly, is at best but a kind of work of super-erogation ; tho' in strictness it may be deemed irregular, as being contrary to the evident design of the Church.

vice.

vice. And our Church seems evidently to have intended, that there should be some portion of the Scriptures read in every office of our common service, excepting the *Litany*; which, with a proper addition of this kind, would be almost a complete service of itself. And our communion-service, as such, is certainly a complete one, without any other; unless you will say, as some do, that it is necessary to take in something further from the ancient liturgies. As to which, we cannot pretend at present to be proper judges. All we desire is, that our whole service may be rendered uniform, upon some uniform and just plan, whether it be of ancient or of modern date. And it is with a view to induce our Governors and the Public to consider about this, that we have offered these observations; designing them more especially to excite further and better inquiry, 'whether our first service alone, with some proper additions and improvements, may not ordinarily be sufficient; and where, on special occasions, it shall be judged not to be so, and another office must be added,—whether it would not seem more regular and less exceptionable, to perform the latter office, at a different point of time, and after some convenient intermission?' Which for our parts, we are well persuaded, is what our Reformers intended, and do believe to be the concurring judgment of all, who are sufficiently conversant in their writings.

S E C T. IV.

A Survey of the principal matter and general order of our Liturgy, with the connection of its several parts ; and remarks thereon.

THE following section, after some amicable debate, is at last permitted to take place amongst these disquisitions. The contents of it are left to every one to judge of, as he shall think proper. For our own parts, we shall neither recommend nor disparage them ; or use any other liberty with them, than to make a few small alterations where we shall see necessary.

1. *A comparative view of our several offices, stated and occasional, in respect to identity of matter, resemblance of parts, &c.* Communicated by a hand unknown.

N. B. The offices of *private baptism*, and of *visiting the sick* (as not being read in the Church) are here omitted.

Yet some of the more *extraordinary* offices, or such as are less frequently used, are sometimes taken notice of ; because it may happen, at particular times, that several *other* offices, perhaps most, may require to be performed at the same, or much about the same time with these.

FIRST

FIRST SERVICE in the Morning.	SECOND SERVICE in the Morning, viz. the Litany.	THIRD SERVICE in the Morning, viz. the Communion-office.	OCCASIONAL OFFICES.
1. Sentences of Scripture, and Exhortation.			Commination-office, in the Application, Now seeing, &c. N. B. This office may be appointed to be read at other times besides the first day of Lent, as the Ordinary shall direct. Rubric.
2 General Confession.—Several of the Collects contain petitions much of the same nature.	Beginning, and some other parts, of the Litany; partly alike, or nearly to the same purpose.	General Confession.	Commination-office. The penitential devotions there, viz. 51 Psal. Collects, &c.
3. Absolution.	Prayer that may be used after any of the former, (whether brought in here, or in the first Service; or whether omitted in both) is the same in matter, tho' not in form, with the Absolution.	Absolution.	Compare the first collect in the Communion-office. This also (like the prayer, O God whose nature, &c.) differs from the absolution only in the form, not in the contents. However, the petitions in both of them are very pro-

FIRST

FIRST SERVICE.	SECOND SERVICE.	THIRD SERVICE.	OCCASIONAL OFFICES.
			per, were but both to come in, in a more proper place.
4. <i>Lord's Prayer.</i>	<i>Lord's Prayer.</i>	<i>Lord's Prayer</i> ; twice in this office: Also once before the <i>Sermon</i> , <i>Lecture</i> , or <i>Homily</i> . See <i>Canon</i> 55.	<i>Lord's Prayer</i> , in the office of <i>Baptism</i> , <i>Confirmation</i> , <i>Matrimony</i> , <i>Burial</i> , <i>Churching of Women</i> , and <i>Commination</i> .
5. <i>Gloria Patri</i> ; often here, viz. after the <i>Lord's Prayer</i> the first time; also after each of the <i>Psalms</i> and <i>Hymns</i> (excepting the <i>Te Deum</i>) after the <i>Athanasian Creed</i> , and the <i>Anthems</i> for <i>Easter-day</i> .	<i>Gloria Patri</i> ; after <i>O Lord, arise, help us</i> , &c.	<i>Gloria in excelsis</i> , or <i>Trisagion</i> , being the <i>Gloria Patri</i> more at large. Yet this angelic Hymn comes in here with the utmost propriety, and is exceedingly affecting.	<i>Gloria Patri</i> , in the office of <i>Matrimony</i> , of <i>Burial</i> , of <i>Churching</i> , and of <i>Commination</i> .
6. <i>Psalms</i> and <i>Hymns</i> , tho' some of them much alike in matter, yet being so aptly interwoven with the several parts of our Service, are more a beauty than a blemish			

FIRST SERVICE.	SECOND SERVICE.	THIRD SERVICE.	OCCASIONAL OFFICES.
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to it; and are therefore here passed over without comparing. Only it may be proper to observe in this column, that some one or other of the *Psalms* occurring in the several offices of *Matrimony*, *Burial*, *Churching*, &c. may sometimes happen to be the same with one of those for the day.

7. *Lessons.*

Epistles and *Gospels*. These being sometimes repeted for several days together, some of them may happen to be the same with part of the *Lessons*.

Sometimes the same passages of *Scripture* may happen to be repeted in some of the *occasional offices*.

8. *Creed*; either the *Apostolical*, or else the *Athanasian*.

Nicene (or *Constantinopolitan*) *Creed*.

In the office of *Baptism*, the form, tho' not the substance, of the *Apostolical Creed*, is somewhat altered by the *Interrogatories*.

FIRST

FIRST SERVICE.	SECOND SERVICE.	THIRD SERVICE.	OCCASIONAL OFFICES.
9. <i>Lord's Prayer</i> ; a second time.			The return of this prayer in the <i>occasional offices</i> hath been taken notice of before.
10. <i>Suffrages</i> (or alternate petitions) before and after the Lord's prayer in this place.	Some like petitions in the <i>Litany</i> , where the Prayer of our Lord comes in.		Compare the offices of <i>Confirmation, Matrimony, Burial, Churching of Women, and Communion</i> .
11. <i>Collect of the Day</i> .	Several parts of this office to the same intent with some of the collects for the day.	Collect for the day here repeated; as also sometimes the collect for the season;—as for <i>Advent, Christmas, Lent, &c.</i>	
12. <i>Prayer for the King</i> : (omitted when the <i>Litany</i> is to be read; as are the three prayers next following in this column.) See also <i>Suffrages</i> after the Lord's prayer.	Petitions for his Majesty here.—Also in the prayer for the <i>Parliament</i> , whether read here, or in the first service.	<i>Collect for the King</i> .	<i>Offices extraordinary</i> ; such as for the 5th of <i>November, &c.</i> Repetitions of this kind frequent in each.
13. <i>Prayer for the Royal Family</i> .	Addresses for the same.		<i>Offices extraordinary</i> , as before.

FIRST

FIRST SERVICE.	SECOND SERVICE.	THIRD SERVICE.	OCCASIONAL OFFICES.
14. <i>Prayer for the Clergy and People ; (the Church, Realm, Magistrates, &c. being here included under more general terms ; as also in several of the Collects.)</i>	Particular Requests for each in this office. — (See also Prayer for the <i>Parliament</i> , comprehending each, in terms proper and significant.)	And in this ; in the prayer for <i>Church-militant</i> ; and also, more concisely in the former of the two <i>collects</i> for the <i>King</i> . — The short petition for the universal Church, in the first of the two collects in the <i>Post-communion</i> -office, will scarce come under this view.	<i>Offices extraordinary</i> , as above referred to.
15. <i>Prayer for all conditions of men. — See the Collects, especially those for Good-Friday.</i>	<i>Intercessions</i> for all mankind.	Prayer for <i>Church-militant</i> .	
16. <i>General Thanksgiving.</i>		<i>Beginning</i> of Prayer for <i>Church-militant</i> , hath a transient declaration to this purpose ; which yet seems not adequately answered in the <i>sequel</i> of that prayer ; as hath also been taken notice of by others.	

FIRST SERVICE.	SECOND SERVICE.	THIRD SERVICE.	OCCASIONAL OFFICES.
17. Prayer of S. Chrysostom.		See the concluding prayers at the close of this office.	
18. <i>The Grace of our Lord, &c.</i>	The same ; tho' not to be repeated, unless Dr. Bennet's remark be just ; of which some notice may be taken in another place.	<i>The Peace of God, &c.</i>	See Offices of Confirmation, Burial, and Communion.

Note ; The design of our exhibiting the foregoing (as also the following) synopsis, as desired by the donor, is to represent our offices just as they are, in respect to repetitions, or any thing of that kind occurring in any of them. And this, not with any intent to expose the offices (which would be unworthy and unbecoming us) but to shew and convince, in a stronger manner than we have yet attempted, that, as our offices are really distinct in themselves, so were they intended by our Compilers, as we have more than once intimated, to be read in the Church at distinct times. If this was not their meaning, we must own ourselves mistaken, and must give way to the judgment of those, who understand and can represent it better. Yet tho' we should be mistaken as to their intent in this point, we cannot very easily be so, with regard to the reason and propriety of things. For of this we can (with modesty enough) presume to be judges, as well as others ; so far (we mean) as we have reason to guide us, in common with them.

Finally,

Finally, if this and the ensuing Synopsis shall prove of any use to bring on a review of our Service, and to make it one regular and uniform method of worship, free (as it ought to be) from every redundancy, impropriety, intermingling of offices, &c; as the *Compiler* will have his end in drawing them up, and communicating them to us; so shall *we* have ours, as much at least, in exhibiting them to the public view.

2. *A summary view of one of our anniversary Offices, and its several contents, as taking in the ordinary Services at Morning-prayer.*

Humbly offered by way of *specimen*.

THE FIRST SERVICE.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Scripture-Sentences. | 11. Second Lesson. |
| 2. Exhortation. | 12. Jubilate. |
| 3. General confession. | 13. Creed. |
| 4. Absolution or remission of Sins. | 14. Versicles following. |
| 5. Lord's prayer. | 15. Lord's prayer. |
| 6. Versicles after it, including the Gloria Patri for the first time; praying for help; exhorting to praise, &c. | 16. Suffrages after it, comprising petitions for the King, Ministers, People, and for Peace. |
| 7. The Hymn instead of Venite exultemus. | 17. When this day happens to be Sunday, the the collect proper for that day is added to this office in its place, Rubr. |
| 8. Proper Psalms. | |
| 9. First Lesson. | |
| 10. Te Deum. | E 2 18. |

FIRST SERVICE.

18. The *two collects* appointed (on other days) instead of the first.

In the *former* of these,

(1) We acknowledge God's *protection*. (2) we praise him for the *deliverance* of this day.

(3) we acknowledge our *unworthiness*, &c.

In the *latter*,

(1) We give thanks for bringing over his *late Majesty* for our delive-

rance. (2) we adore the *justice* of divine Providence therein.

(3) we pray for *grace* to make due *improvements* of such mercies, &c. [A well-composed prayer.]

19. The second collect for *peace* and *safety* from *enemies*.

20. The third collect for *grace*, and defence against *sin* and *danger*.

SECOND

SECOND SERVICE, viz.

The Litany.

21. In the *introductory* part, we supplicate for *mercy and impunity*, and for *deliverance* from a variety of evils spiritual and temporal, &c.
22. In the *intercessionary* part, we pray—for the *Church universal*,—for the *King*,—*Royal Family*,—*Clergy*,—*Council*,—*Nobility*,—*Magistrates*,—*People*,—*all Nations*, &c. for the *erroneous* and *deceived*;—for the *weak-hearted*;—and, finally, for all that are in *danger*, or any kind of *tribulation*; concluding with petitions for true *repentance*, *forgiveness*, and *grace to amend*; for *mercy*, *peace*, *acceptance*, &c. as in the *suffrages*.
23. *Lord's prayer*, with two *versicles*.
24. Prayer for *assistance* in all *troubles* and *adversities*, and for *defence* against our *adversaries*, spiritual and temporal.
25. The *alternate petitions* after it; desiring *help and deliverance*; *defence* from our *enemies*; *mercy* and *forgiveness*, &c.
26. Another prayer *averting evils*, and for *dependance* on *Providence* in all our *troubles*, &c.
27. Prayer appointed *in the end of the Litany*. Wherein, (1) we gratefully recognize the *goodness* of *Providence* in delivering us from the *Popish-plot*,—and in conducting over our *late King*. And (2,) after acknowledging and lamenting our *past demerits*, we pray for *repentance* and *amendment* for the future.
28. Prayer *instead* of that appointed in time of *war* and *tumults*.
In this prayer, (1) we acknowledge the *deliverance* of *this day*. (2) we pray against the *machinations* of our *enemies*. (3) we pray for the *King*,

SECOND SERVICE.

- and for all in *authority*,
and for his Majesty's
realms in general, &c.
29. The prayer by his
Majesty's special com-
mand, to be used every
day during the present
war. Wherein we im-
plore aid and protection
in this time of danger ;
a blessing on our Sove-
reign, his counsels, fleets,
and armies ; and de-
precate the judgments
which our sins deserve,
&c.
30. The prayers upon se-
veral occasions, if any
of them are now to be
used : More particu-
larly,
31. The prayer for the
High-Court of Parlia-
ment, if now sitting.—
Wherein we intercede
for this kingdom in ge-
neral, especially for this
- august Assembly ; that
their consultations may
tend to the glory of
God, the honor, safety
and prosperity of the
King, and those of
Church and State under
his government, &c.
32. The general thanks-
giving, wherein we ex-
press our gratitude to
God for all his mercies
temporal and spiritual ;
desiring grace to ex-
press the same in our
lives, &c.
33. Thanksgivings upon
several occasions, when
any happen at this
time.
34. Prayer of S. Chrysof-
tom ; concluding our
devotions with begging
that our requests may
be granted, &c.
35. The Grace of our
Lord, &c.

N. B. When any of the *occasional* Offices (such as
that for *Baptism*, *Churching*, &c.) happen to come
in during this solemnity, they are commonly intro-
duced within the course and compass of the two
foregoing services ; tho' the *interposition* of them
seems not a little inconvenient, as breaking in upon
the natural order and progress of our worship, and
being heterogeneous to the main design of it.

THIRD

THIRD SERVICE, viz.

The *Communion-office* ;
[appointed to be read
at the *Communion-table*,
Rubr. 4.]

36. *Lord's-prayer*. —

This prayer comes in
a *second* time in this
office, when the *Lord's-*
supper is administred, as
it is, in some places,
on this day.

37. The *collect* for purity.38. Ten *commandments*.39. *Collect* for the *King*.40. Prayer or *collect* in-
stead of that for the
day. — Wherein, (1)

We acknowlege the
divine power, wisdom
and goodness in pre-
serving the *King* and
Parliament from the
intended massacre. (2)

We desire *grace* to be
thankful for all mer-
cies ; particularly for
his late *Majesty's* safe
arrival, &c. (3) We
pray for the *King*, and
Royal-Family, &c.

41. *Epistle*.42. *Gospel*.43. *Nicene Creed*.

44. Here comes in the

publication of *Banns*,
Briefs, *Citations*, *Ex-*
communications, &c. if
any.

45. Form of *bidding*
prayer, according to
canon 55. Wherein the
congregation is to be
exhorted to pray for
the *catholic Church*,
and especially for the
Churches of *England*,
Scotland, and *Ireland* ;
for the *King* and *Royal*
issue ; for the *Ministers*
of the Church, of every
order and degree ; for
the *King's Council*, the
Nobility, *Magistrates*,
and *Commons* of the
realm ; — and finally, to
praise God for his faith-
ful servants departed,
&c.

46. *Lord's-prayer*, as en-
joined by the said *ca-*
non.

47. *Sermon*, or else *Ho-*
mily, viz. one of the
six against *rebellion*.
And if so, then follows,

48. The *prayer* imme-
diately subjoined to
each of them, in the

THIRD SERVICE.

Homily-book.---Wherein we petition for the defence and safety of our Sovereign, and the realm, &c.

49. The *Aet* for a public *thanksgiving*, &c. (viz. 3 *Jac. c. 1.*) appointed to be read on this day in all Churches *after Morning - prayer, or preaching*. See the *Aet*.

50. *Sentence at the offertory*. [The *Priest* to say this at the *Lord's-table*, viz. after his return from the pulpit, and desk. *Rubr.*]

51. *Prayer for the Church militant*.---Here we pray, (1) for the *universal Church*. (2) for all *Christian Kings, Princes and Governors*, and especially for our own *King*. (3) for his *Majesty's Council*, and all in *authority* under him. (4) for all *Bishops and Curates*. (5) for all the *people* of God, especially the *congregation* present. (6) for all that are in trou-

ble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. (7) We bless God for all his servants departed this life in his faith and fear, &c.

52. The *prayer* appointed after that for the *Church militant*.--- Wherein (1) we acknowledge the *miraculous preservation* of our *Church and State* from the *popish conspiracy*. (2) From open *tyranny and oppression* in a *succeeding reign*. (3) We praise God for *both deliverances*. (4) We pray, that we may shew ourselves *thankful to God*, and *dutiful to the King*.

53. If the celebration of the holy *eucharist* follows, then comes in (after the exhortation and invitation) another *general confession*, another *absolution*, &c. as in the ensuing part of the communion-office.

54. The *concluding collects*, one or more.

55. The *Blessing*.

Note. The reason of continuing the foregoing numbers in one unbroken train of succession thro' the several services, as if all the three were but one intire office, is, because we do not find, in any of the rubrics of this day's liturgy, any intimation given of the least intermission to be observed, in any part of the whole, from the initiatory *Sentences* to the final *Blessing*.

3. *A few Queries relating to the foregoing Summary, &c.*

Upon review of this latter specimen, we beg leave to propose the following Queries; desiring they may, and believe they will be allowed fair consideration, by every unprejudic'd reader.

1. Doth not the intermingling of so many offices, collects, &c. seem a little immethodical and incongruous? And will not the variety, which is so great, brought in so frequently, from so many different parts of our services, be apt to create a little difficulty and confusion; especially in some young Ministers; and perhaps also in some of the elder, as well as younger members of the congregation, when they are to turn over, backward and forward, in so many different places? (ω) — Our Reformers wisely con-

(ω) For a single, and not improper instance, among others, see the *Suffrages after the Creed* (that is, as we suppose is meant, immediately after the Lord's-prayer) which the *new rubric*, next following the *Jubilate*, directs you to insert in that place. It seems you are to begin with the Suffrages there referred to, in the first service. When you have gone through part, you stop short, and come back from thence to those you find in this; — and then return to the remaining Suffrages in that. By which you

considered what they did, when striking out the prodigious, and almost infinite variety of rules, rubrics, interlocutories, &c. that superabounded in the popish rituals, and perplexed every soul that came near them (a), they framed with admirable skill for the

you perceive, that (how easily soever it might be otherwise ordered) you have not the Suffrages all in one view, in either place, but part in one, and part in another; which seems, and has been found, not to be altogether so convenient.—An instance not unlike this (in point of referring from one place to another, and directing to insert or substitute, &c.) may be observed in the rubric before the *burial of the dead at sea*. And we find, that till the last review, there was a like rubric in the *evening service* (immediately after *Deus miseratur*) which stopt the Minister short in that place, and referred him to another, with these words, *Then shall follow the creed, with other prayers, as is before appointed at morning-prayer*. When the creed, with other prayers, (viz. the Lord's-prayer, suffrages, and first collect) were read, he was then to return again to the place where he had left off, and to go on with the second and third collects. And he either ended with these, or, if he was to proceed to the prayer of S. Chrysostom, and the benedictory prayer, (vid. *Wheatly*, p. 165.) he was to turn for them to the end of the Litany, where alone these two were to be found. But the Commissioners at the *Savoy*, observing the impropriety and inconvenience of such an order, thought fit to alter it; which gives us room to hope, that the same may be done still, where a like case may require a like alteration: And there are perhaps more than one or two such instances to be found in our Liturgy, tho' it is reasonable to think it were better, if there were none. And indeed some have wished, (nor, as we think, have wished without reason) that the whole service appointed to be performed at any one time, [suppose the whole for a *morning*, except the Psalms and Lessons, and, if you please also, the Epistles and Gospels] were set down in our Common-prayer, in one orderly series, and one intire view; the *occasionals* in the mean time remaining separate as at present. No doubt some service might be done to our Liturgy by such a regulation.

(a) *The number and hardness (i. e. difficulty) of the rules called the Pie, and the manifold changings of the service, was the cause, that to turn the book only was so hard and intricate a matter, that many times there was more business to find out what should be read, than to read it when it was found out.* Thus speak our worthy Reformers,

the time, one plain, uniform and manly method of worship ; consisting of few things only, and those the most necessary ; and only of few rules, and those the most proper.—Their example is never thought by wise men to be unworthy of our imitation ; especially in things relating to the Church, and its worship.

2. Another Query, which naturally offers upon a review, is this :—What harm could there be in reducing all our offices into better method and connection ? May not all the petitions we present, in any or each of them, relating to any one head, be disposed under that head ? And might not all of them be put together in one regular order, once for all, during one service ; rather than be, as they now

Reformers, in their preface, concerning the service of the Church, prefixed to the Common-prayer : Where they also justly complain, that the order and decency of divine service was mangled and *broken by the multitude of responds, verses, vain repetitions, commemorations, and synodals* ; — meaning by the former of these last two words, the mixing and blending together of *different services, &c.* and by the latter, the publishing of *provincial constitutions, reading the canons, &c.* Instead of which they *set forth*, as they tell us, *rules few in number, and plain and easy to be understood.* Whereby, as they intimate, they studied, to the utmost of their power, to render every thing relating to the order and uniformity of divine worship, and particularly the lessons (of which they here principally speak) far more commodious than before.—If you would judge, with any exactness, of the excellence of their first attempts, see the two Common-prayers of *Edward 6*, especially that of 1549, and compare both (if you can have patience enough) with the wretched medley they were forced to reform. Nor will it be amiss to observe, how ready and free they were to review and improve their first essay, as soon as they could conveniently do it, and saw proper reasons for it. And yet that essay, as well as the revisals since, had been confirmed by act of *Parliament.* This shews what they thought of a just Christian liberty ; and gives us a specimen of their genius, for a just and improving reformation.

are,

are, disjointed and segregated under so many different arrangements? — Why may not the variety of our services be brought into one service, or one compendious system alone, that shall be compact, regular, and uniform? And might we not still keep up a variety, or rather improve upon that we have, rendering it more convenient and proper? Might it not by this means be made much more beautiful than it is? And would not a judicious reduction of our offices be far more commodious as well as beautiful, than tacking them one upon another, as we do; dividing where there seems to be no occasion to divide, and uniting where it may seem more proper to diversify? — From the beginning, surely, it was not so: And we hope it will not continue so to the end. — We refer this Query, novel and unprecedented as it may appear to some, to be candidly considered by all.

3. Our correspondent, who favored us with the foregoing specimens, proposes another Query, which is this. — ' Suppose that to be true, which hath often been asserted by learned men, well versed in the laws of our constitution; that the service appointed for S. Barnabas's day can by no means, either in law or conscience, be omitted on the day of his Majesty's happy accession to the throne: — In the *first* place, to what an enormous length would *both* the services, as here supposed to be enjoined on that day, extend? — to say nothing of *occasional* ones, which may also come in on the same day. — In the *next*, how would they abound with repetitions (β), which no wit of man

(β) Our anonymous friend, whoever he is, will here forgive us a small omission. In the papers he has favored us with, immediately follow, in this place, the words—*big with absurdities*. Which

‘ man could consistently defend? — And, *lastly*,
 ‘ what great confusion and want of order would
 ‘ there appear throughout the whole?’

And the same free and communicative person adds the following note.

‘ Most of the matter and contents of our Liturgy
 ‘ being in themselves truly excellent, and confessed
 ‘ to be so by all impartial judges; it is the opinion
 ‘ of some very sensible men, who have accurately
 ‘ examined it with this view, that out of the whole,
 ‘ in its several parts, there might, with no very ex-
 ‘ traordinary skill (γ), and with some ordinary
 ‘ pains,

Which we therefore omit inserting in the place intended, as we would willingly admit no expressions into this work, but such as we think the least offensive. And by subjoining this note, where we just exhibit the words, without adopting them for our own, we hope we at once give a specimen both of the regard we pay to the Public, and of the justice we would do to the author. Who having given us reason to expect more papers upon subjects of this kind, has here our thanks for those he has already communicated; and for his friendly intention of obliging us with more hereafter.

(γ) The reverend and learned Dr. *Newton*, in his sermon at *Bow*, (Mr. *Hutchin*’s anniversary lecture) intimates, p. 20, that *it will be found extremely difficult in practice, however easy it may seem in theory, to correct and amend* our Liturgy. With all just deference to the judgment of so worthy a Divine, (whose sermon hath been but too unhandfomely treated by an adversary of unequal parts) we presume still to think, the difficulty will not in fact, and upon trial, be found to be so great, whenever that trial shall be made by men of abilities, allowed and countenanced by authority. The matter being in the main so excellent, the chief difficulty, we conceive, will arise, not so much from the nature of the work (which is what the Doctor seems to suppose) as from the prejudice of men. In this latter respect indeed, we readily agree with this ingenious writer, that to correct and amend the Liturgy to the satisfaction of persons, who are prejudiced, will, in all likelihood, be found more than a little difficult; and perhaps we might

‘ pains, be formed a Liturgy every way complete
 ‘ and unexceptionable ; all impropriety of method
 ‘ and diction, all redundancy and superfluity of
 ‘ matter, and whatever else may give just offence,
 ‘ and prevent the accession of other Protestants, and
 ‘ their

might add, impossible. For we can easily persuade ourselves, that no alterations can satisfy those, who are against all alterations ; and who laying it down as a maxim, that our present form is perfect, do thence rightly infer, that no improvements can be made, nor ought to be attempted. With respect to men of this persuasion, we have nothing more to say, as having no hopes of convincing them ; and upon this supposition, all proposals for reforming must once for all and for ever be given up as superfluous, if not absurd.— But prejudice apart, for once ; let us only suppose (what impartial men, we presume, will without much difficulty allow) that it hath been made pretty clear in the course of the foregoing papers (to say nothing as yet of those that are to follow) that some amendments are necessary : If this be admitted, and we leave it to all men of candor to judge, then it would seem, that an attempt should be made ; however difficult we may suppose it, before we are engaged in it. And we have that opinion of the piety and other valuable qualities of our esteemed friend Dr. *Newton*, that were he, with other excellent men of our Church, to be appointed upon a committee for such an undertaking, the supposed difficulty, with respect to the thing itself, and not to men’s prejudices, would vanish beyond expectation.

P. S. An ingenious Gentleman, upon perusing the foregoing note in Manuscript, was pleased to make the following remark. ‘ It
 ‘ is, I think (says he) rightly observed, that dissatisfaction on a sup-
 ‘ posed improvement of our Liturgy can arise from no other
 ‘ principle than that of prejudice ; unless where some sinister and
 ‘ selfish views (those of a party for instance) shall also strike in,
 ‘ and engage men in an opposition.—Let us suppose the pre-
 ‘ sent Liturgy had never yet been known in England ; that this
 ‘ Church had no established form to this time ; that the genera-
 ‘ lity of our Governors and people expressed a great desire of
 ‘ having a complete one, drawn from the best Liturgies antient
 ‘ and modern ; that some learned and judicious travellers meet-
 ‘ ing with this Liturgy in foreign parts, but in a different Lan-
 ‘ guage, and highly approving its contents ; but judging its
 ‘ form and order capable of considerable improvements, should
 ‘ accordingly

' their union with ourselves, being removed out of
 ' the way ; or at least so tempered and modelled,
 ' that as little offence as possible may remain. —
 ' It was thought that the reform intended in 1689,
 ' if it had then taken place, would have brought in
 ' the major part of the Dissenters to the commu-
 ' nion of the Church. And we continue to think
 ' so to this day ;' *hoping, with Bp. Burnet, that the*
corrections, that were then agreed to by a deputation
of Bishops and Divines, will, at some time or other, be
better entertained than they were then.— Men of can-
 did and generous minds have ever since been wish-
 ing, expecting, and wondring. And they hope,
 that near threescore years observation may have ri-
 pened our judgment, and bettered our temper.

' accordingly undertake to reform it ; and having rendred it in
 ' its whole frame as complete and perfect as they could, should
 ' present it in English to our Convocation, submitting it to them
 ' to make any farther improvements they should judge necessary,
 ' and then make it public, under the authority of their approba-
 ' tion. Suppose this book not enjoined, but only recommended
 ' by such authority ; and that every Clergiman, who should not
 ' think fit to use it in his Church, should be requested, if not re-
 ' quired, to render his reasons to his Bishop in private writing.
 ' Prejudice in favor of a former Liturgy having here no place,
 ' enforcement by laws and penalties being prudently foreborne,
 ' and the gentle methods of reason and persuasion only used, I
 ' am humbly of opinion (and shall be free to own my mistake,
 ' if it be one) that the good book, here supposed to be publicly
 ' recommended, would meet with universal approbation, and by
 ' degrees at least, if not all at once, become the general and
 ' standing Liturgy of the Church of England.— You will say,
 ' this is only supposition. I mean it for no more : But it tends
 ' to confirm your observation, and I am concerned no farther.'

S E C T. V.

*Queries and Observations relating to the Psalms,
Lessons, Epistles and Gospels.*

AFTER these more general observations, relating to the form and connection of our several liturgical offices, and the method, in which we are directed to use them; it may be proper now to descend to particulars, and consider the matter and propriety of the several parts of our service, where we shall judge they may require our consideration.

I. We begin with the *Psalms*, as appointed to be read in the ordinary course. With regard to which, we hope we may have free leave to propose the following queries.

1. Whether it would not be better, and more serviceable to the primary intent of reading the psalms in a congregation, if, instead of reading them promiscuously as they come in our way, we had some select ones, as we have very often select lessons, and sometimes also such psalms, pointed out by the Church? (δ) ——— There are some psalms, which seem not altogether so suitable for ordinary congregations, and might, we presume, be very well passed over

(δ) And yet it would seem, that some even of our select Psalms are not quite so apposite to the purposes they are applied to, as may be supposed to be first intended. To give no other instance for the present, than the two Psalms selected for the Evening-service on *Whit-sunday*; in neither of which can we find any thing, that relates to the particular Subject of the day, tho' the obscure diligence

over in all. The psalms in themselves are unquestionably good, and were penned with a spirit of great devotion and piety. But they are not all alike plain; and the design of some of them may be more liable to be perverted, either by ignorant or by ill minds. Indeed so may the Scripture almost throughout; and so may also the dispensations of Providence, in every instance of which we have not a competent understanding. But then, both Scripture and Providence have passages in them, that are sufficiently intelligible to all: And perhaps the greater part in both may be so in respect of all ordinary cases, and the proper uses they are intended for. In relation therefore to the psalms, we desire no more than that it may please our Governors, for the sake of the generality of our congregations, to appoint such to be ordinarily read in them, as may be best understood by them, and are least liable to be perverted to a wrong sense; or (which would be much the same,

diligence of some liturgical commentators will always find out something, wherein they can observe resemblances and allusions, which few besides themselves can be so happy as to discern.— Altho' we are not yet come to consider the *Lessons*, yet this may seem to be no improper place to take notice, by the way, that some of these also, as selected for solemn seasons, are scarce so applicable, as may be thought, or might be wished, to the seasons they are applied to. Sometimes a whole chapter (and that perhaps no very clear one neither) seems to be introduced for the sake of a word, or else a verse or two, which contains something of a sound, that might be supposed to favour the subject of the day; when yet the sense may be little or nothing to the purpose. We leave it to men of more learning to determine how far, for instance, the first lesson for morning-service on *Easter-even*, viz. *Zech. ix.* may be applicable to the solemnity of the day. The sense seems at least to be doubtful in ver. 11, 12. which we suppose were chiefly intended to be applied. And we would refer it to inquisitive men to examine, whether this was not one of the lessons appointed for this day in the times before the reformation, in order to give some seeming countenance from the said verses, to the doctrine of *purgatory*, *limbus patrum*, &c.

and answer the purpose as well) to except those few they shall judge to be less edifying, and less proper to be read in mixt assemblies. — To name no other for the present than the six psalm. (ε) Every one can see in what sense it is commonly understood, and can hear in what sense it is often quoted. Why may not this psalm therefore, together with some others, be omitted in our ordinary course of reading, as the book of *Canticles* (ζ) is for a just reason omitted in our calendar? unless indeed just notes, or a just paraphrase were to go along with them. We see Mr. *Ostervald* hath given admirable cautions at the end of this psalm; and Dr. *Watts* hath, with singular dexterity, and equal prudence, given the whole psalm a Christian turn.

2. Since we have *two* translations of the psalms, the older and the newer, and both (we suppose) equally authorised; it may seem no improper question to ask, whether one alone, supposing it duly correct, might not be sufficient? and whether it would not, on some accounts, be better and more adviseable, that we had but one? For, to say the least, where is the occasion for two, if one will answer the purpose? And if some inconveniences may be prevented by retaining one only, and dismissing the other, will not this be a sufficient reason for taking the matter into consideration? We shall not concern ourselves with the dispute, ‘which of the two translations deserves the preference.’ That dispute might have been avoided, if we had had but one translation. And the issue of it hath been little more than this, that the abettors of each have suffi-

(ι) It may be observed this psalm is omitted in the *introits* of the first Common-prayer of King *Edward VI.* See also *psal.* cxxxvii. 7, 8, 9. not unlike some passages in *psal.* cix.

(ζ) Vid. *Wheatley* on Com. Pr. p. 139.

ciently disparaged the other, whose cause they did not espouse. (n) However each translation, we doubt not, hath in it

Something to blame, and something to commend;

and neither of them is as complete as it ought to be. Our old translation, as much as it hath been disparaged, is evidently the more free and intelligible of the two; which is a circumstance of some merit in its favor, considering it is appointed to be

(n) *Query.* Suppose our old translation had been placed in the body of the Bible, and our *new* in the Common-prayer; would the contending parties have taken different sides? Or would they both have remained silent? Or else have freely acknowledged, that both translations wanted mending? Dr. *Nichols* seems to be sufficiently ingenuous, as well as just, in his remarks relating to both. *We must own*, says he, *there are some passages, which are not so exactly done in this old translation; and we may truly say one might shew as many in the new one: which I do not take to be the most exact performance in its kind. For it carries from the beginning to the end one gross fault; and that is, a rendition too nicely literal; which makes it Hebrew still, tho' in English words, and hardly to be understood without a paraphrase.* And he observes further (whether with equal justice, let others judge) *that our last set of translators seemed resolved to alter, for pure alteration's sake, when no manner of occasion required it; leaving out as much English phrase, and bringing in as much Hebrew, as ever they could. Whether it were (says he) to recommend their skill in the Hebrew critic, or whether they had any other design in view, I cannot tell.* Preface to his paraphrase on the old translation; where (to make good his charge, of their being too servilely addicted to the Hebrew idiom) he proceeds to give the reader a taste of their performance, in several instances. Mr. *Johnson* has done the same in his defence of the old translators, *Notes*, p. 13, 14, &c. And both own, that a more free way of translating ancient authors is more useful, as it lets middling readers more easily into the sense and meaning of the original.—We humbly presume, upon the whole, that if the observations of these two learned men were to be fairly pursued to a point, and applied as they ought to be, to other parts of our translation, as they are to that of the psalms only, they would conclude, with equal justness, in favor of a new translation of the whole Bible.

read in churches. Yet even this translation, besides other defects, appears (as it must at so great a distance of time from the first framing of it) to have too many obsolete words and phrases: which, to make it more generally useful, might, we think, be better changed into more modern ones. (θ)

But there is another inconvenience attending our having two translations, which, we wish, was as easily removed, as it is obvious to be discerned, and too visibly demands the notice of our Governors. There are some passages in both, which, upon comparing, seem not to agree so well with each other, as might be wished. May we not therefore humbly propose it as a query deserving some attention, Whether it may not be proper (till we have a new and better version of the whole) either to discard one of the translations, and improve the other; or, which may be as well for the present, to bestow some pains in reconciling both (ι), according to the sense and design of the original? Are not our people a little puzzled, if not shockt sometimes, when they see, or think they see, contradictions in these translations? In the divine originals there are none, and in our human translations there ought to be none: But it will at least be thought there are some in these latter, 'till they shall be rendered more uniform, and more agreeable to each other. And surely it is

(θ) Dr. *Bennet*, tho' he speaks as favorably as he well can of this translation, yet is free to own (and it is the least he could say) that *it may well be improved*. But what he adds presently after, is, we hope, not so true as it is discouraging; viz. *We have no prospect of any other translation*. Notes on Com. pr. p. 42. 43.

(ι) Amongst other concessions made by the episcopal commissioners at the review in 1661, we find this to our present purpose, that they were willing the two translations of the psalms should be collated.

our duty to remove all appearance of contradictions where we find any ; especially since unbelievers will not fail to make a handle of them to expose the Bible, and to persuade the vulgar, (as they frequently do) that they have no certain rule of faith. The seeming inconsistency between the two translations in Psal. cv. 28. is well known, and hath been often objected. And altho' the present Lord Bishop of *Winchester* (x) hath very well removed the difficulty with regard to non-conformity, still there remains room to wish, that every appearance of clashing may be removed likewise ; so that neither conformists, nor non-conformists, nor any other, whether learned or unlearned, may have any just reason to object.

3. With respect to the use of *psalmody* in our churches ; why are we confined to the matter prescribed in the *psalms* only ? The New Testament lies open, and is thought to contain many more elevated sentiments, and much more suitable on the whole to Christian congregations, than any in the book of psalms. May not some of the more select passages of that new and more glorious revelation, and indeed of the whole Bible, be introduced, and that with more benefit, being thrown into proper metre ? It seems now to be universally allowed by men of thought and judgment, that Christian hymns do best become Christian churches. The excellent Mr. *Ostervald* (λ) already mentioned, very discreetly

(x) *Reasonabl. of conformity*, p. 71. Also *Johnson's* notes in defence of old transl. p. 16, 65, 66.

(λ) ' It would be a question worth examining, whether we ought in Christian churches to use only psalms and canticles out of the Old Testament, &c. One would think that Christian hymns, which should be sung to the honour of God and Jesus Christ, chiefly to celebrate the wonders of our redemption, might be extraordinarily useful to nourish piety, and to stir up devotion, as well as more agreeable to that which the Apostles prescribe,

creetly points out a rule to this purpose. And Dr. *Watts* (who may without envy or offence be mentioned with him a second time) hath with much good sense and good poetry, and, every one will allow, with much serious piety, put this rule in execution: and we suppose much to the benefit (*viz.* the Christian instruction, and *godly solace and comfort* (μ)) of those congregations and families, that think fit to use the hymns he hath drawn up in this way.

4. A worthy Divine (ν) of our Church, in a small treatise on the subject of psalmody, hath suggested to us what we take to be a very proper rule, relating to the more reverent and decent manner of performing that duty. He thinks, and strongly asserts, that it ought to be done by *all* the congregation *standing*. The protestant churches abroad do, perhaps, all or most of them, observe this rule. And by the rubrics of our own church, all our hymns and psalms in prose are to be read by us in the standing posture. What the practice of our dissenters is, in singing either psalms or hymns, in their respective congregations, we are not able to say, nor think it necessary to inquire. But several of the more sensible and candid sort of persons among them, have been observed to express their concern, for the too little regard, that is shewn to psalmody in many of our churches; expressing, at the same time, their wish, that it was more universally joined in; and that a duty so rational, so delightful, and so highly becoming all Christian people in the worship

' prescribe, and which the primitive Christians practised in their ' Assemblies.' Causes of the corruption of Christians, part II. p. 264, &c.

(μ) Title-page to *Sternhold and Hopkins, R. Wisdom and others.*

(ν) Mr. *Burroughs*, in his discourses intitled, *The devout psalmody.*

of the Deity, was not (as it too often is in some country-churches) with so much unconcernedness (§) transferred to the parish-clark alone ; or, which is as little to be commended, to the company of singers, as they are usually distinguished in such places.— Every unprejudiced man of our communion must own there is a defect here ; and must also wish, that by some good method this defect was remedied : Which, if done, would certainly be a means to render our service more uniform, more edifying, and more affecting.

Nor does it seem proper, all things considered, that the choice of psalms and hymns should be left, as it commonly is, to the indiscretion of the clarks of parishes, or to that of the set of singers we have mentioned. Great inconveniences have and do often attend the allowance of such liberty to injudicious and illiterate people, in regard of the psalms that are to be sung ; a liberty not allowed to the most learned and judicious of our Clergy, with respect to those that are to be read. Our Church is extremely beholden to our observing and discreet Bishop of

(§) The primitive Christians would have been surprized and concerned at so much coolness and indifference. There was nothing they took more delight in, or practised more, both in public and private, than psalmody. In their churches, the whole congregation, men, women, and children, bore a part in it, joining all together in a common celebration of the praises of God, and their Saviour, and being herein usually under the direction and conduct of a proper precentor, who led the way, &c. *Hippolytus* (an ancient writer quoted by *S. Jerom.* and after him by *Mr. Mede*) reckons it as a sign of the worst of times, when Christians shall become remiss in this divine duty : *Ad antichristi novissima tempora,—psalmodum decantatio cessabit.* We hope those times are not yet come : And God grant they never may ! A better spirit seems to be reviving in many congregations. And we shall be glad to find it continue and improve.

London, (o) for his endeavors to remedy this great abuse. Were his Lordship's regulations to receive the sanction of a law, or should his right reverend Brethren think fit to direct such orders about this matter to their respective dioceses, as he has done to his, it is to be hoped we should no longer have reason to complain of so many indiscretions committed on this head.

5. Would it not be a proper and very laudable custom, (were it to take place again upon encouragement from authority) if a suitable psalm or hymn were to be sung at our *communions*? viz. either during the administration, as was done in the primitive churches; or else immediately after it, (and just before the Lord's prayer, in the latter part of the office) as we have observed done in some churches of our own; probably deriving that practice from the good custom and direction of former times; when (by the first B. of *Edw. VI.*) some sentences of holy Scripture were appointed to be said or sung in this place.—The singing of the *Veni Creator* at our Ordinations is really both very

(o) *Directions to his Clergy*, 1724, Sect. III. Also (by the same hand) *The excellent use of psalmody, with a course of singing psalms*, &c. Several others have complained of this abuse, and expressed their wish to see it reformed; particularly Mr. *Wheatley*, p. 213. where he speaks of the *introits*, that were set down in the first common-prayer of King *Edward VI.* of which he has given us a *table*; as Mr. *Yardley* also has done before his *Rational communicant*: And both agree, that 'if these *introits* were now used in our churches, it would tend more to edification, than those portions of the psalms, which are sometimes so very indiscreetly pitched upon; and that it would be much more decent for us to be guided by the Church, what psalms to use, than to stand to the direction of every illiterate parish-clark; who too often has neither judgment to chuse a psalm proper to the occasion, nor skill to sing it so as to assist devotion.'

becoming,

becoming, and very affecting. And would a psalm or hymn, extolling the wonders of divine love in our redemption, or any other way adapted to the occasion, be less so at the solemnity we have mentioned?

6. May it not be thought high time, now at last, to give our miserable old version of the singing-psalms a fair dismissal out of our Common-prayer-book, and to admit a newer and better in its room?

7. Another query occasionally presents itself, which we think may not be improper, or out of place, to mention here.—Supposing we had a greater variety of hymns and anthems (we mean in prose, and collected out of the Scriptures,) would not our divine service receive a very useful and delightful improvement from such an addition? Our solemn festival of Easter-day, (π) hath a short, but a very proper anthem of this kind appropriated to it. And if all other great festivals of the Church were dignified and distinguished with like anthems, their solemnity (we think) would appear in a more perfect beauty.

R E M A R K.

Looking back upon what we have written under this general article, we observe here and there some of the old objections thrown into a new tho' less offensive form. It may therefore seem proper once for all in this place, to allege a word or two in justi-

(π) See the *Allelujab's* and *Suffrages* subjoined to these anthems in the first book of *Edward VI.* They seemed to be so very proper and affecting, that we wonder how they came to be left out in the subsequent editions; and hope, that upon another review they will be re-inserted.

fication

fication of our conduct ; and that, in respect to any subsequent, as well as any preceding observations of the like nature. What we have to say is no more than this : We follow no party, but follow reason only, and the dictates of our own plain and natural understanding ; not minding whether others have said the same before us, but whether what we say is just, and ought to be said by *us*, or by any others. To turn over the voluminous controversies upon such subjects, would be endless. We know we need not do it. We are persuaded *reason* will prevail with men of reason. And reason *alone* will do it, without the concurrence of any authorities ; tho' we shall not, on proper occasions, neglect even them, especially authorities drawn from members of our own Church.

II. From having considered the psalms, we proceed next to the *Lessons* of our public service.

And here we may be allowed to ask, are the *Sunday-lessons* (especially those out of the old Testament) always the most choice ones, and the best fitted for general instruction ? As to those appointed for *other days*, we would rather chuse to forbear asking, whether *they* also might not on the whole be a little better selected. For indeed the plainest and most instructive are always the most suitable to be read in congregations. Nor, with our good will, should any be read there but such. For to what use is it to read any others in mixt assemblies, especially among poor and illiterate people ? And is it not easy to see the inconveniences, that attend a promiscuous way of reading ? For which reason, some lessons are thought to be less happily markt out in the course prescribed. We speak not inconsiderately, neither would we reflect upon the wisdom of the Church. But we offer intimations, that we think
are

are proper to be offered. And those intimations, we suppose, may be proper to be considered also by those, to whom we offer them. And if it be requisite to be more particular, and to give some instances of our more general meaning, we humbly offer these that follow.

1. Some lessons seem to be inexpedient and improper to be read in all congregations indiscriminately. Such are several in the *Levitical* books, and others in the *Apocrypha*. We can easily observe, how they are entertained in some audiences, as well those of a more refined, as others of a grosser taste.

2. In some lessons, the genealogical tables at least, to mention nothing more of that kind, might, we conceive, be very well passed over, without any detriment to our several congregations, or any discredit to our Church in general. We observe, that the pedigrees in the first of *St. Matthew*, and third of *St. Luke* (as being judged of no use to be read in a congregation) were directed to be omitted by the rubric (ρ) before the calendar in our old Common-prayer

(ρ) * So often as the first chapter of *St. Matthew* is read, either for Lesson or Gospel, ye shall begin at ver. 18. *Now the birth of Jesus Christ, &c.* And the third chapter of *St. Luke's* gospel shall be read unto the middle of ver. 23. *Being, as was supposed, the Son of Joseph, &c.* These were the words in our Common-prayer, 'till the last review. And why they were then left out, we confess we can see no satisfactory reason.

With respect to our own sentiments, we shall only add, that there are, we think, many other instances of lessons, which contain some parts, that might more properly be left out than read. We shall name but one here, which may be a proper sample of many others: And that is *Gen. xxii.* The grand history, which we are chiefly concerned to hear, and to be acquainted with, is over at ver. 19. And the lesson (we imagine every sensible man will allow) might end there, without going on to what is altogether of an heterogeneous nature, and no way to the purpose of Christian edification, at least in churches. — We may observe a different

prayer books. And for a good reason, we think, might all the like passages be omitted (as the genealogies

ferent order taken, relating to some lessons ; as particularly those out of this book, for the morning-service on *Quinquagesima*, and the Sunday following : The reasons of which order are as just as they are obvious : And if you cast your eye on the calendar for *January*, you will find a proper note placed underneath, directing where to stop in *Exod. vi. viz.* at verse 14 ; the remaining part of the chapter turning chiefly upon genealogies. 'Till the reign of King *James I.* this chapter had no place at all, that we can find, in the calendar ; and was then by his order first inserted (tho' very much out of place) at the beginning of *October*, in the room of the famous fifth chapter of *Tobit*, which was then excluded, and hath never since gained re-entrance. Now as to the exclusion of certain chapters, or parts of chapters, out of the calendar, we find a just and satisfactory account given by our compilers, in an old rubric. which 'till the last review (when for reasons to us unknown, it was altered to what it is at present) ran thus : ' The old Testament, &c. shall be read through every yeare once, except certaine bookes and chapiters, which bee ' *least edifying*, and might bee *best spared* ; and therefore bee left ' unread.' Mr. *L'Estrange* hath made a proper remark on this rubric, justifying the Church's conduct in omitting passages that are less instructive. *To omit* (saith he) *what is in-edifying, our Church hath good warrant from that rule of the Apostle, Let all things be done to edification.* *Alliance*, p. 25. And he elsewhere very justly blames the presbyterian Divines of the last century, who to make amends, as they thought, for their having thrown off (too indiscriminately, as we think) all the apocryphal books, did by a zeal sufficiently indiscreet, order in their directory, that a great many chapters of the Old Testament should be read, which (as that Gentleman observed) were *not only less, but not at all edifying to a popular auditory* ; taking notice at the same time and place (p. 56.) of some excellent things, which were read in the primitive Church, but are not read in any modern ; as particularly *Clemens's epistles to the Corinthians* ; to which he might have added some other pieces, no less valuable, of that kind ; which might undoubtedly be read, with far more benefit, to a Christian auditory, than many both canonical, and uncanonical, that are sometimes read in our churches, and we suppose also in dissenting-oratories.——It will probably be a long time before the Church of Christ comes to a rational and discreet agreement about things of this nature, and several others tending to the restoration and perfection of the Gospel-state : But we believe it will by degrees reform itself upon the purest model, and return again to its primitive simplicity, making good sense

nealogies in the *Chronicles*, &c. are) in our present calendar, if authority should think proper to allow of such omission.

3. The *divisions* of many of our lessons (as was observed before of many of our chapters and verses) seem to require a better regulation.—Some begin, others break off, a little too abruptly. And the connection being not discerned, with respect to what goes before, or follows after, the sense must consequently remain imperfect. And indeed sometimes (with becoming reverence be it spoken) no sense at all, or scarce any, can be made of the beginnings and conclusions of several of them, when coming in, or breaking off, with so little propriety, as in some instances they are observed to do.

Of the *former* sort (to give but a few specimens) are—the second lesson for evening-service on *Christmas-day*:—the first for the same service on the feast of St. *Michael*; which, by the way, we humbly suppose might more properly begin at the entrance of the chapter, a few verses before;—and the second lesson in the morning, on the festival of *All-Saints*; where, instead of beginning at v. 33, (which is inexcusably abrupt) (s) it might perhaps seem more
ad-

sense and Christian principles its only rule in rectifying what is amiss, and reducing things to their right standard.

(s) We observe, that all our old Common-prayers, from the Reformation down to the Restoration, tho' they directed us to begin at v. 33, yet taught us to introduce the lesson, taking its rise there, with the words *Saints by* [or, as in our more modern translation, *through*] *faith*, &c. Why our Revisors after the restoration chose, that we should begin so very abruptly, as to say only at the entrance, *Who through faith*, &c. we can only offer our conjecture. We suppose the late horrible transactions of pretended saints (during our intestine commotions) were too fresh in their memory. And it is natural enough to think they could not so well relish the word *Saints* (as many cannot to this day,

advisable to begin at the verse immediately preceding. And the 7th chapter of the *Acts*, where more than once in the year we begin at ver. 30, may deserve to be considered. As also the first of St. *Luke*, which the calendar sometimes directs us to divide in the middle. (τ) But such division falling exactly upon ver. 41, for the beginning of the second part, happens not to be near so proper for that purpose, as ver. 39. Which therefore, if the calendar intended we should begin there, ought, we presume, to have been distinctly specified; as done in some of the proper lessons for holy-days.

Of the *latter* sort, we need only give one instance; but one so very remarkable, that it falls under the notice and censure of most people.—The rubrics and calendar, that enjoin our lessons, enjoin

day, mistaking and misapplying it) after so late and so fatal an occasion; especially when immediately followed by such words as these,—*through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, &c.* For those egregious hypocrites pretended they had done all this (*subdued three kingdoms, &c.*) *through faith*, as their cant-term then was; but in reality through the strength of mere enthusiasm in some that were in low, and through political wickedness in others that were in high places. Nevertheless, speaking coolly and impartially at this distance of time, this seems to be no just reason, why the lesson might not even then, have begun in a manner somewhat less abrupt than it hath done ever since. However, it is easy to rectify an impropriety of this kind; and it is time to forget all past prejudices, as well as forgive all past offences.

N. B. The second Lesson at Evening Prayer on the 30th of *January* begins at ver. 32. of this chapter.

(τ) So we find the direction in a great variety of editions. Thus it was in those before the last review; which, whether through mistake, we are not able to say, were followed in many that succeeded it. But in some later editions, which have come into our hands since our writing as above, we observe this direction is altered; whether with or without authority, we are not certain. This, however, points out to our notice, the little care, that is taken in the printing of our Liturgy: Which we design to consider more distinctly in another place.

(we

(we conceive) every word of them to be read, as they are found in the book. And yet it is observable, that *Acts* xxi. which is read in our churches three times a year, ends with the word, *saying*, when nothing further is said; unless we go on, as perhaps we ought, with part at least of the following chapter. And, that the lesson might not be too long on our so doing, it is easy to see a proper beginning for it at ver. 15, of the preceding chapter, *viz.* chap. xxi. (v)

Under this head of the division of our lessons, it may be permitted us to ask, whether we do not sometimes divide a little too minutely, and without sufficient occasion; when at other times, we do not divide at all, even where there is just reason for dividing. Our meaning is, we seem on certain occasions to break the thread and connection of a history too much, for the sake of preserving some little portion of it for the epistle or gospel in the communion-office. An instance of this, among others, may be found in the two second lessons, and in the epistle, for St. *Stephen's* day. The former of these lessons breaks off at ver. 30th of *Acts* vii. The latter (that for the afternoon) goes on from thence to ver. 55th of the same chapter. But then, we have the small remaining portion of it, from ver. 55, thrown in (somewhat prematurely, as one would think) before we have heard the preceding part from ver. 30th. For that remainder is ordered to be read in the morning-service, at the communion. Thus we have seemingly some unnecessary breaches in one

(v) Several MS copies of great antiquity, both in the King's library and elsewhere, conclude this chapter much more properly than our present division does. For they close it with the words, wherewith this division begins the next chapter, *viz.* (ver. 1.) *Viri fratres & patres, &c.*

chapter,

chapter, and in one continued piece of history, which at other times (ϕ) are avoided there; and have plainly a subsequent part going before a prior one, contrary to the common method of reading history in like cases.

4. Since the breaking of Scripture into too many, as well as into too few parts, may be attended with inconvenience; will it not be allowed by impartial judges, that some of our lessons are too short, and others too long? We have some, that consist of not above ten or a dozen verses; and some, that do not go beyond five or six; others, that exceed fifty, sixty, or seventy verses; and one at least, that amounts to fourscore. (χ) There may possibly be some good reason for such disproportionable appointments at certain times; but we must freely own, we do not readily see the reasons for every such appointment. A discreet mediocrity may perhaps in all cases do as well. Nor will it, we imagine, be very difficult for men of judgment, to fix upon such a proper mean.

(ϕ) *Apr.* 10, and *Aug.* 9.

Some of the shorter lessons are,		Some of the longer lessons are,	
	Verses.		Verses.
<i>Deut.</i> xxxiv.	12.	<i>Bel and Dragon</i>	42.
<i>S. Mich.</i> 2d. leff. afternoon.	10.	<i>Luke</i> ii. & <i>Acts</i> xiii.	52.
<i>All-saints</i> , 1st. leff. morn.	9.	<i>Acts</i> vii.	60.
<i>Hof.</i> xiv.		<i>Jer.</i> li. and <i>Hist. Sus.</i>	64.
<i>Bar.</i> v.	7.	<i>Deut.</i> xxviii.	68.
<i>Christ. day</i> , 1st. leff. morn.		<i>Bar.</i> vi.	73.
<i>Easter-eve</i> , 2d. leff. morn.	6.	<i>Matt.</i> xxvi.	75.
<i>Whits. tues.</i> 1st. leff. morn.		<i>Luke</i> i. (on <i>June</i> 17.)	80.
<i>Christ. day</i> , 1st leff. ev. serv.	5.		
<i>Malachi</i> iv.			
<i>Tobit</i> ix.	5.		
<i>Christ. day</i> , 2d. leff. ev. serv.			

5. Can

5. Can it be thought to be on all accounts expedient, or on any account necessary, that the same individual lessons should return, as they sometimes do, within the compass of the same month, or within a very short space of time, after they have been read before?—For instance,

Gen. xxvii. on *Jan* 1, and 9.

Exod. xx. the ten commandments twice on *Easter-tuesday*, morn. ser.

Isaiah lx. *Dec.* 24, and *Jan.* 6.

Matt. vii. *Jan.* 9. and *Feb.* 29.

— xxvii. on *Palm-sunday*, and part of it on the *Saturday* following.

Acts vii. *Dec.* 7 and 26.

— x. the same epistle for *Whitsun-monday* as for *Easter-monday*.

Rom. ii. *Jan.* 1 and 3.

So likewise one or more of the psalms ; as

Psal. cxxxii. *Dec.* 26 and 28.

— cxlv. *Whitsunday* in the afternoon ; as also the next morning, when it happens to be the 30th of *May*.—And when any month consists of 31 days, the last seven psalms are read two days successively.

And if our epistles and gospels were to be minutely compared with our lessons, and a table drawn up, wherein each of them might be distinctly seen in one view, together with the particular days assigned for each ; it would appear, that the returns of this kind are more numerous, and follow one another more closely, than is commonly imagined.

6. Would it not in fact be useful, as it is in reason allowable, and perhaps also in experience necessary, that in some passages of certain lessons, that are read, there should be proper discriminations inserted in the version, to distinguish between the several persons, that are exhibited in the history? The translation, and consequently the public reading of it in the lessons, is neither so clear, nor so elegant, as we presume it might and ought to be, for want of such a requisite distinction. Let us take notice only of one or two passages. *Acts* vii. 1, 2. *Then said the high priest, are these things so? And he said, [Who said? The same high-priest for certain, according to common expectation, and the ordinary rules of grammatical reference; but according to truth, which is not always distinguished by every auditor,—not the high-priest, but a greater and better man, namely, Stephen—said,] Men and brethren, &c.* The translators were a little more free in ver. 59 of this chapter, inserting *God* as the object of St. *Stephen's* prayer; and might, we make no doubt, have used equal freedom by supplying the Apologist's name in ver. 2. where the sense so manifestly requires it; and where indeed, without such a supply, that sense is almost unavoidably perverted, or must by most people be misunderstood on the bare hearing; especially in vulgar congregations.

The observations we have delivered upon this passage, may, perhaps, among other familiar instances, be justly enough applied to the short and frequent interlocutories in *Gen.* xviii. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. where we think the translators, without doing the least injury to the sacred text, might have ventured to supply the proper discriminations between the persons there speaking, *viz.* the great almighty *Jehovah*, and *Abraham* his humble friend. [See also
chap.

chap. xxvii. 35, 36. and chap. xxiv. 35. with the ingenious Mr. Kennicott's remark on this latter, in disert. 2. p. 127. And many more such instances might be added.] A query therefore here occurs; which, as we cannot think it improper or unnecessary, we shall venture to propose as follows.

7. Since it is observable, that no small number of our lessons begin with such indeterminate words as these, *And he said, And he went, And he entered, And he arose, And he began, And he looked; Or, And when he had called, When he was come, Now when he had ended, &c.* (↓) our query is, whether it may not be allowable for our ministers, in reading to their congregations, to make the proper supply, as the case shall require? So small an allowance, one would think, can never do hurt, and may seem at least expedient, if not necessary.

8. There is another case not very unlike this, which may deserve a query. Observing, that our marginal translation (ω) is in some places manifestly preferable to, and in others explicatory of, that in

(↓) It is indeed pretty manifest to most, tho' not to every auditor, that these and the like beginnings of chapters in the Evangelists relate to our blessed Saviour. But would it not be better, if his name was specified either in the translation, or by the Minister? as we see is done in the former, in some places; particularly *Luke xix. 1. and John ix. 1.* in both which places the translators have with good reason inserted *Jesus*, tho' in the original his name is not specified.

There are many passages also in the *Acts*, where such supplies are wanted, and ought to be made, at the entrance of chapters. Thus *chap. iv. 1. viii. 1. xiv. 1. xvi. 1. xvii. 1.* All the chapters in the Gospel of St. *John* are remarkably free from this exception; unless you except those, which contain some of our Lord's discourses to his disciples. See more upon this head under the next article, viz. *Epistles and Gospels.*

(ω) See Dr. *Gell's* observations on this head, in *Lewis's* hist. of the English translations, 8vo. p. 335.

the body of the page; may we not have leave to ask, whether it might not be permitted our Clergy, sometimes, and where they shall see just occasion, to take notice of the former, by occasionally inserting it in their reading the lessons? A liberty this, we will readily acknowledge, not proper to be allowed to all, and indeed not likely to be assumed by any without due permission. But if it be in some cases expedient, why may it not be allowed under proper restrictions? And if the translation in the margin is not of equal authority with that in the text, why is it retained? (α)——The truth is (and we must again

(α) It is obvious, that our marginals are generally of two sorts; either such as were intended to be explanatory as notes, or such as shew the translators were somewhat doubtful about the sense; which therefore they thought proper to leave undetermined. And this, as it is a specimen of their ingenuity, so it is a good reason for retaining those marginals in our printed books. To be sure it is not done without sufficient authority; whether equal to that of the text-translation, we are not able to say, and think it better to leave to the judgment of others. Only we would observe, that some of those marginals seem to be proper helps to the understanding, not only in private, as we suppose they were at first intended, but also in public, if it were allowable to take some of them in. Now the instances, in which we think such an allowance might be expedient, are comparatively but few. Some of which we shall here produce: And the specimen, if it serves for no other purpose, will at least be an additional argument for a *new translation*: Which, we are not unwilling to own, is one principal reason for our proposing these 6th, 7th, and 8th queries, with this note upon the last of them,

Among those marginal references, which we shall take notice of, some seem useful and expedient, others in a manner necessary to be taken in.

Of the *former* sort are these. (1). Such as seem to give us a better translation; as *Luke xxiv. 31. He vanished out of their sight.* [or rather, as it is in the margin, ceased to be seen of them] *2 Cor. xii. 4. Which it is not lawful [Marg. or possible] for man to utter.* *Eph. vi. 12; Against spiritual wickednesses [or wicked spirits] in high places.* There is indeed another marginal here, *viz. or heavenly*, instead of *high*. But that doth not seem quite so proper, the meaning probably being, *in the aerial regions.* *Phil. i. 13; My bonds in Christ, [or for Christ] &c.*
2 Tim.

gainst repete it) we want a new and better version,
with a more accurate division of our sacred oracles;
and

2 Tim. ii. 6; *The husbandman, that laboureth, must be first partaker of the fruits*, or, as it seems better rendered in the margin, 'The husbandman, labouring first, must be partaker of the fruits.' Heb. vii. 3. *Without descent* [or 'without pedigree,' i. e. upon record] Chap. x. 19; *Having—boldness* [or liberty] to enter.—(2.) Such as are expletive of the sense, where the original phrases are elliptical; as Gen. iii. 16; *Thy desire shall be* [subject] *to thy husband*. Rom. viii. 3; *And* [by a sacrifice] *for sin*. The same supplement ought to have been put in the margin, or rather inserted in the translated-text, in 2 Cor. v. 21. And it is remarkable, that in Heb. x. 6. the same original phrase, which we have in Rom. viii. 3. (*viz. καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας*) is freely and justly rendered, *And sacrifices for sin*. And we may observe with pleasure the same just and necessary freedom used in ver. 3. which in the Greek is somewhat sparing in expression; 'Ἀλλ' ἐν αὐταῖς ἀνάμνησις ἁμαρτιῶν κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν, translated, *But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made if sins every year*. To these may perhaps be added, Mark ix. 43. *offend thee* [Marg. or *cause thee to offend*,] tho' a better translation perhaps than both would be, *ensnare thee*.—(3.) Such as are explanatory of any less common, or less commonly intelligible names of places, &c. As, 1. of some Hebrew names. Thus Gen. x. 9. *Babel*. M. that is, *confusion*. Chap. xxii. 14. *Abraham called the name of the place Jehovab-jireb*, [that is, *the Lord will see, or provide*. [Chap. xxxiii. 20. And called it *El-elohé israel*, [that is, *God the God of Israel*.] Exod. xv. 23. *Marah*. M. that is, *bitterness*. Judg. vi. 24. *Jehovab-shalom*. M. that is, *the Lord send peace*.—Or else of some English words, that may be less understood by ordinary readers or hearers; as Job xl. 26; *Nor the habergeon* [or breast-plate] a word originally French, *haubergeon*. 1 Tim. iii. 6; *Not a novice*, [or one newly come to the faith].—Or, 2. some eastern phrases, either figurative, or otherwise less clear and plain to ordinary capacities; as Ezra ix. 8. *a nail*; M. or *a pin*, that is, *a constant and sure abode*. Job iv. 9, *By the breath of his nostrils* [that is, says the margin, *by his anger*; and perhaps it would have been more expressive of the majesty and force of the original language, if it had been said, *by his powerful anger*.] Chap. vi. 3. *My words are swallowed up* [that is, margin again, *I want words to express my grief*.]

Of the latter sort may be reckoned these few amongst others; 1 Cor. xi. 10. *The woman to have power* [that is, a covering] *on her head*. The word is of the same import, or intends the same sense, with *περικεφαλαίον*, rendered *a covering*, [or, as in the

and then such queries as these would be needless.
Nor would we have descended so much below our
general

margin, *vail,*] in ver. 15. And we could have wished, that the words, *because of the angels*, had been rendered, either in the text or margin, *because of the messengers*, or *spies*. See Gough's critical dissertation on this verse. Then again, ver. 29, of this chapter: *Eateth and drinketh damnation [or judgment] to himself*. So ver. 34. and St. *Jam.* iii. 1. A word of no small moment to be rightly distinguished, and productive of very unhappy consequences for want of being so.—Another specimen, that may deserve notice, may be *Heb.* iv. 8. *For if Jesus* [that is, *Josuah.*] It seems not very easy to account for our translators chusing to put *Jesus* in the text, and *Josuah* in the margin; when it is beyond dispute, that this latter person, and not our Lord *Jesus*, is there meant. And yet not one in an hundred of our common people, when they hear this sacred name mentioned, can readily apprehend any other to be intended by it, than our blessed Lord; unless indeed some of them should, perhaps, have heard of *Jesus* the son of *Sirach*, and of his grandfather *Jesus*, mentioned in the prologue to his book. But they expect not to hear of any other of this name in the New Testament.

Altho' we have exhibited the foregoing specimens of marginal translations, as somewhat pertinent and deserving notice; yet we must own, there are numbers of others, that we do not look upon in the same light for correctness, and can scarce prefer to the version in the text, even where that also falleth short of being just. We will take some of the first, that shall fall under our view. Here are two or three (we presume, not the worst in their kind) that appear on bare glancing upon the epistle to the *Hebrews* only. Chap. iv. 6. *To whom it* [marg. the Gospel, but more truly the promise of rest] *was first preached*. Chap. viii. 6. *Mediator of a better covenant*. So ch. xii. 24. *Mediator of the new covenant*. In both which places (as also in *Gal.* iv. 24, &c.) the margin presents us with the far less proper word, *testament*. But more particularly, chap. xii. 17. where there seems to be a double error, and that of some consequence. Translation in the text, *he found no place of repentance*; in the margin, *or way to change his mind*. Whose? *Esau's* own mind, as any common hearer or reader would be apt to understand the words. But had the rendering in the text been, *he found no place of repentance* (or, no alteration of purpose) in his father; or had that in the margin been, *no way to change his father's mind*, we humbly think they would both of them have been

general design, as to propose them here, but out of real pity and concern for all our more ignorant congregations throughout the kingdom. For we cannot behold their honest but unimproving attention in such cases, without sentiments of most tender humanity, and emotions of most Christian compassion. And *we* (β) *would to God* from our hearts, with one of the wisest and most compassionate of men, *that all the Lord's people were prophets*, in every congregation of Christians, both in this, and in every other kingdom under heaven!

And in this Christian and benevolent strain of thinking and wishing (wherein every humane and Christian bosom, we are very sure, will bear a sym-

been nearer the mark, and less liable to misconstruction. See *Kettlewell's measures of christian obedience*. B. v. chap. vii.

To make an end of this long note, wherein we willingly allowed ourselves to expatiate, in order to do some service, if we can, to the Bible; 'till we have a more correct translation of the whole, it is to be wished we had some more and better marginal versions, or illustrations: for instance, to such passages as these, *Rom. vi. 17*, where the too close and circumstantial rendition of the *Hebraism*, at the beginning of the verse, seems to be unpardonable, and the less exact observation of the *antiptosis* in the latter part to be far from commendable. And might not the words *like passions* in *AEs* xiv. 15. and *Jam. v. 17*. be better translated in the text, or else explained in the margin? The sense plainly is, *We also are men as ye are*; *Elias was a man like ourselves*; or *no less than ourselves*. See the full and true sense of the expression (which yet neither our margin, nor perhaps commentators refer to) in *AEs* x. 26. The words *תַּנְּשׁוּ* and *ἀδὴς* (so frequently occurring, and so frequently mis-translated) deserve also to be considered, and taken notice of in our margin, no less than other words, which, admitting of a double acceptation, have such notice taken of them. *1 Cor. xv. 55*. agreeing with the words and design of the *Hebrew* in *Hos. xiii. 14*. is perhaps the only place in the N. Test. where the *Greek* word (in all other places alike) is translated *Grave*; the margin at the same time not forgetting to put us in mind of the other word, by which it is usually translated.

(β) *Numb. xi. 29*.

pathizing part) we presume to subjoin one further thought under this head.

The thing we would propose, we own may, and probably will, by men of learning, be judged to be of no great importance; but by *us*, who desire, on all occasions, to consult the interest of the unlearned, is judged to be a point, that may very well deserve to be offered to our learned Governors. And it is this :

9. Our ordinary people seem to want some plainer and more suitable instructions than they ordinarily have. Our Church seems to have designed for them the plainest, as we may judge by her homilies : But her homilies (which are now neither so plain, nor on some accounts so proper, as they were intended to be at first) are seldom or never read in our churches. Nor (which is as much or more to be wished) have we any comment upon Scripture recommended by authority. Some persons of eminence in the church have expressed their wishes freely and publickly upon the subject. And altho' we are not altogether of the same mind ourselves (because on some accounts there may be considerable inconveniences;) yet we cannot but heartily concur with them in the main scope of their wishes; and therefore shall be very free to declare our own, as far as we judge them pertinent to the present purpose. What we have to propose is this; going, as near as we can, a middle way : That 'till something more perfect shall be established, it may please our Governors to set forth some plain and practical comments on some of the *lessons*; those lessons being first supposed to be somewhat better selected, than they seem to be at present. Such comments, we presume, might sometimes, and on proper occasions, be read with

with great profit (γ) to the audience, instead of a sermon or homily ; nay sometimes, we scruple not

to

(γ) The proposa], on the whole of its design, is by no means new ; having evidently the practice of antiquity on its side, and being supported by the best precedents. Our blessed Saviour expounded the Scriptures to his auditors, *Luke iv. 21. xxiv. 27.* St. Paul did the same, *Act. xvii. 2, 3. xiii. 15, &c.* Justin Martyr informs us, in reference to the practice of the primitive Church, that after the Scriptures were read, the President of the assembly preached, instructing and exhorting the auditors to the imitation and practice of those excellent things they had heard, *Apol. 2.* Origen, in the account he gives of Christian preaching and instruction, says expressly, that the sermons in his time were *explanations of the lessons, that were read. Contra Cels. l. 3.* And it is plain from several of his works, that his own sermons were such. For we find him often commenting upon Scripture ; and sometimes, not only on one or two, but several chapters together, after they had just before been read in the congregation. The names of *tractates* and *tractators* are well known ; the former being expositions of Scripture, the latter those, who delivered them in the church. Nor was there, that we can find, any public assembly held, without such expositions. The two celebrated Fathers, St. Chrysostom and St. Austin, are peculiarly noted for their instructions of this kind ; both of whom, from time to time, expounded whole books of the divine Oracles to their audiences ; as St. Cyprian did the Lord's-prayer to that under his care. The practice continued in later times, even in the darker ages of the Church ; as may be seen by the numerous *Latin* postils, those of Haymo and others, that abound in *Papish* countries.—Dr. John Colet, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, publickly expounded all St. Paul's epistles, which took him up some years ; and this was some time before the opening of the reformation. Our Reformers kept up, or rather revived, the same good practice of unfolding the word of God in large portions to the people. Archbishop Cranmer expounded the epistle to the Hebrews ; Bishop Hoper the book of *Jonah* ; Bishop Latymer the Lord's-prayer : Thomas Becon (formerly Cranmer's Chaplain) commented on all the *Sunday Gospelles that be redde in the Church thorowout the yeare* ; and his work being *perused and allowed according to the Quene's maiestie's injunctions*, was imprinted in 1566, and set up in many churches ; in some of which it remains to this day. After him the learned Bishop Cooper, in 1573, published a set of very useful expositions upon all the lessons of the old Testament, as then appointed for Sundays. His contemporary, the excellent Bishop Jewel, expounded several of St. Paul's epistles,

to say, with greater profit than either. But we chuse to say no more.

epistles, with the first of *St. Peter*, and went through all the Epistles and Gospels for the yearly course. If we descend to later times, we find the expositions and posils of *Dr. John Boys* (Dean of *Cant.* in *King James I*'s reign) on the Epistles and Gospels; and more lately those of his remote successor, *Dr. Stanhope* on the same. And tho' the expositions of *Bishop Patrick*, whilst he was Minister of *Covent-Garden*, be not, nor were by him intended to be printed (being only cursory and extemporaneous observations) yet we have been well assured by some, who could remember it, that it was the constant practice of that good man, on all the festivals that happened on the week-days, to expound the epistle and gospel appointed for the day. We also find it recorded of the venerable *Bishop Bedell*, that he frequently commented on the psalms for the day. And the late learned *Mr. Reading*'s sermons on the lessons exhibit a pattern, that deserves notice and imitation. Indeed it seems to be the design of our Church, that sermons should always be expositions upon some part or other of the Scriptures appointed for the day. *Mr. Wheatly* assures us, that the special reason of the sermons being ordered in the place where it is by our rubric, is because the first design of it was to explain some part of the foregoing Epistle and Gospel; and this, as he says, in imitation of that practice of the *Jews* mentioned in *Nehem. viii. 8*.

From these several remarks it appears pretty plainly, that the judgment and practice of the antients, and of many eminent Divines of our Church, (whose number we could easily have enlarged) favor our proposal; and that the explaining and applying of *Scripture* is one of the best and most useful ways of preaching; especially to common audiences. And as to *catechising*, which seems the next best, we shall probably give our thoughts about it hereafter in some proper place.

We cannot better conclude this note than with the words of *Bishop Burnet*, in that pathetic and most public-spirited oration, which we find at the close of the history of his own times. 'Long sermons, in which points of divinity or morality are regularly handled, are above the capacity of the people: Short and plain ones, upon a large portion of Scripture, would be better hearkened to, and have a much better effect. They would make the hearers understand and love the Scriptures more.' And loving and understanding them, they would certainly read them more, and be more improved by those Scriptures.'

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III. The *Epistles* and *Gospels* being much of the same nature with the psalms and lessons, the proper place to take notice of them seems to be here. And our queries about them shall be,

1. Whether some of them might not, on a review, be somewhat better selected? They are really, many of them, pickt out with much judgment and propriety; and the contents are both plain and useful. But we cannot say they are all so; nor that any of them appear to just advantage, where they happen to be separated from their proper connection, or introduced without such notices as seem previously requisite (δ). Abruptness, we own, is sometimes a beauty;

(δ) Many of our *Gospels* in particular seem to be attended with this defect; that they give the congregation no notice at the beginning, concerning the divine person, who is so frequently the subject of them. It is true, that most of our people can have a pretty near guess about the matter. But the inserting a word or two, to specify our blessed Lord at the entrance, could, we humbly think, be no way improper or inconvenient; whereas the omission many times may appear very incongruous. How improperly, for instance, would the Gospel for the 5th Sunday in *Lent* begin (as it did before our last review) with, *Which of you can rebuke me of sin?* Our Revisors therefore acted a commendable part, by introducing it with *Jesus said*, then subjoining the words of the present translation. And indeed they very prudently left out the *old translation* in all the epistles and gospels; which (tho' it was the first, that was made after the Reformation) was till then retained in all; but was at the same time justly complained of in all, on the account of many improprieties; some of which we may perhaps take notice of in some other place. Again, how improper would it be to introduce the Gospel for the 24th Sunday after Trinity, with barely the following words, viz. *While he spake these things unto them?* We therefore find it introduced, as it ought to be, with, *While Jesus spake these things to John's disciples*. And we observe the old translation had guarded in like manner against such abruptness, tho' otherwise attended with a small inaccuracy; *While Jesus spake unto the people*.—Had the Gospel for the third Sunday after *Easter* begun all on the sudden with, *A little while, and*
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beauty; but is seldom so, and can scarce ever be, in such instances as we have in view; where not beau-

ye shall not see me, such a beginning, we imagine, would not have been half so proper as that, with which the words are now introduced, viz. *Jesus said to his disciples*. Which words are also set at the entrance of the Gospel for the Sunday immediately following; and of those for the 6th and 9th after Trinity; and of that for St. *Philip* and St. *James*. The like discretion has been used in many other places; of which we shall point out but two, viz. the 20th and 22d Sunday after Trinity. The Gospel for the former, instead of beginning with, *And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said*, begins more properly with only, *Peter said unto Jesus*.

But on the other hand there are (it must be owned) numbers of passages, where both gospels and epistles, especially the former, begin much too abruptly; as will easily appear upon examining. The commissioners at the last review shewed a just freedom of judgment in leaving the genealogy of St. *Matth.* i. out of the Gospel for the Sunday after *Christmas-day*; where it was kept in 'till then. And had they also thought fit to dismiss the enumeration of tribes in the Epistle for All-Saints, (passing on, for instance, from the words *Children of Israel*, to *After this I beheld*) we presume the public instruction would not have been less proper, or less profitable. And why they altered the beginning of that epistolary portion from what it was before (*Behold I John saw another angel*) to what it is now, we must own, we can discern no reason.

However, they did extremely right in consenting to take in the present translation in the room of the old (which was by that time grown very improper to be used in public;) whereas, had they continued to defend it, as had been usually done, because it was in the book; and resolved to retain it there, under the specious plea of reverence for its antiquity, or any other such amusing pretence, we should have had it to this very day in all our Common-prayer books; and, notwithstanding its numerous improprieties, and not very pleasing indelicacies, it must have been read in all our churches and chapels, from the royal one at St. *James's*, to that of St. *Michael* in *Cornwall*. And yet many were for having no other version of the epistles and gospels, any more than of the psalms; being perfectly content with the old in each, and apprehending danger to the Church and Liturgy from the admission of any other into our service; tho' the newer translation, as far as we can see, stood upon equal authority with the older. But it is not easy to account for people's prejudices: And men of observation will own, they were here without grounds.

ty but instruction is required; tho' we rather wish, that both may go together as much as possible, in every thing relating to the worship of God.

2. We may be allowed the freedom of putting another query, though we have transiently touched upon the subject before.—May not these smaller portions of scripture (we still mean our epistles and gospels) be supposed to be the less necessary for the instruction of a congregation, after so much other Scripture hath been read in our lessons, psalms, and hymns? We very well know that the custom of reading them is founded on antiquity; and we would pay all just regard to so venerable a name. But circumstances being altered, and the reason of things not requiring a strict imitation, we humbly presume the Church is at liberty, on proper occasions, to deviate from antiquity. In what we here say, as well as in every thing else, we beg we may be rightly understood. We do not desire, that the epistles and gospels may be laid aside, but that the frame of our service may be better adjusted; and when it is so, we doubt not, but these may have their proper use in the ministration at the altar.

R E M A R K.

Before we conclude this Section, we judge it proper to lay down one general remark; which we are desirous should be applied to particular cases, as the importance of any of them, more or less, shall happen to require.

In what we have hitherto offered, we have intermixed a variety of particulars, which do not seem to be all of them of equal concernment. And in what we shall propose hereafter, we shall probably
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insert some more, which may be justly deemed to be of inferior consideration.

If a query should arise, how far we desire any stress should be laid upon those, which are of less moment; the question may soon and easily be resolved: Let them be allowed the weight they shall be judged to deserve; and we desire no more.

As to those, that are of more importance, and upon which we shall be found to lay the great *stress* of our application; we hope *they* will not be passed over, or regarded only in the same light with those of less consequence. We are very sure, that some of the points we offer, deserve the most serious consideration of a Christian Church and Christian State. Nor do we yet know, that we have, or foresee, that we shall, offer any, that are of no concern. We believe, all may deserve consideration, especially the more weighty ones. And those, that shall appear to men of judgment to be of less weight, we are willing, as we said, they should pass as such. For as we judge freely ourselves; so we leave others to judge as freely of what we write. Nor shall we be in the least offended at any one's being of a different judgment from ours; provided he expresses that judgment with due candor and civility. For we look upon civility to be due to all men; tho' assent of judgment, as we apprehend, is due to none, any farther than just conviction shall require it should be given (ε). And of this we humbly suppose every man is to judge for himself, tho' he should judge very differently from us, and even reject the whole of our design.

(ε) 'Assent, when reason guideth it, is as unwilling to be yielded where it is not, as withheld where it is, apparently due.' Hooker's *Eccles. Pol.* p. 223. ed. 1682.

More observations will be made on this head in the *Postscript*, that is intended at the close of the whole : Where we purpose to consider all objections of a more general nature, that shall then occur to us.

S E C T. VI.

Queries and Observations relating to the Athanasian Creed, Catechism, Collects, and Prayer for the Parliament.

WE have considered the epistles and gospels, lessons and psalms, as far as we intended ; and have given as little offence, as we could well avoid giving, in treating upon each. Some other particulars will now engage our observation, and we trust will also engage our care to be as inoffensive as is possible.

1. The first great article we here propose to exhibit, puts us in mind of being cautious, as much as any we have yet touched upon ; and that is the *Athanasian Creed*. However, well knowing the sincerity of our belief (for we unfeignedly assent to that creed, on the whole) and conscious to ourselves of no other than the most honest and most generous views in all our inquiries, we shall be very free, and no way afraid, to propose our queries ; (1) which are these.

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(1) It seems, that the proposing of modest and humble *Queries* upon the Subject, is very allowable even in the opinion of those, who have been the greatest advocates for this creed ; and the proposers of such queries, they think, are intitled at least to a civil and good-natured answer. The late learned Mr. *Wheatly* was of this mind ; and was indeed, as some of us well remember, very humane

Is the creed we have mentioned (which has been the occasion of so much unchristian altercation in almost

humane in his conversation also, when any particulars in our Liturgy were proposed, as points, that occasioned some difficulty to conscientious minds. We will give our readers a passage at large to this purpose, from his book on the three creeds; where, in page 376, &c. having the *Athanasian* creed chiefly in his view, he speaks as follows.—‘ But suppose, may some say, it should be granted, that we have made out the truth of our doctrines; yet how does it appear, that these doctrines are such fundamental articles of Christianity, as that a belief of them is necessary to a Christian’s salvation? How can we defend the creed called the creed of *Athanasius*, which makes the minute and critical definitions it gives of these doctrines, so necessary to the everlasting salvation of all men, that *whosoever will be saved, it is necessary before all things, that he hold the catholic faith*, as it is there with so much curiosity explained; and that *except every one do keep it, in the sense there explained, whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly*? How, it will be asked, can we prove, that God ever made the salvation of his creatures to depend on the belief of such niceties, as few [perhaps none] of them can ever comprehend? Or if this cannot be proved, how shall we vindicate either the author of this creed, in dealing out the sentence of damnation so freely; or the charity of our Church, in admitting into her public and solemn offices, a creed, which, however true as to its doctrines, is so very severe and uncharitable in its censures?

‘ Such questions as these, I own, may be asked; and if they are modestly and humbly proposed, the proposers of them have a right to a candid answer. For it is acknowledged, that there have been formerly some very great and good men, who have notified their dislike of some expressions in this creed, and particularly the verses, which are usually called the *damnatory clauses*: And since there may be some sober, serious, and well-disposed Christians still, who from the objections of others, or from reflections of their own, may be prejudiced against our creed on the same account; I shall think my time and pains well spent, if—I can be able to give the least ease to a single mind.’

This is spoken with great moderation and charity, becoming a man of reason, a Christian, and a scholar. Now the queries we intend to propose, are such, as we have reason to believe this honest man, if living, would have judged to deserve a fair hearing, and fair answer. And if he thought, that all good means should be used to give satisfaction even to a single conscientious mind;

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most every part of Christendom) of such great benefit and importance to be read in our churches, as some have contended? Is it so plain and intelligible, as to be truly useful and edifying to a congregation? For *that*, we suppose, (next to making profession of our faith therein) is one great end of reading it in public. And yet how few are there in comparison, who have any notion of what they are reading? And if they have little or none about it, as is plainly but unhappily the case with the bulk of our congregations, is the intent of their reading it answered?

Let us ask again, can it be necessary, or indeed congruous, that any thing should be read as a public declaration of faith, which is so much above the capacities of most, who read it? How then shall he, that occupieth the room of the unlearned, say *Amen* to what he heareth or readeth, seeing he understandeth not what is uttered either by himself, or others? For except we utter with the tongue words easy to be understood, as well in our creeds as prayers, do we not in effect speak unto the air, and in our speech become barbarians, not only to one another, but even to ourselves?—Whether the Church is edified, God glorified, or the honour of his religion advanced hereby, is left to others to consider. It seems to us more rational, and more agreeable to the design of Christian worship, that every thing uttered therein should be as plain and intelligible, as it may well be, to every common understanding;

we hope it may be judged to be of much more importance to give satisfaction to *many* such minds, when they humbly and modestly request it, in relation to so great a subject. Which satisfaction, they still believe, after all that this worthy author and many more have said upon the argument, can no otherways be attained, than by allowing a liberty consistent with that charity, which is the great characteristic of the Gospel of peace.

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and that nothing should be made a part of it, which may either raise scruples in intelligent minds, or prove unedifying to those, who are ignorant. For however the things, that are spoken, may be just in themselves, and every way consonant in their meaning to the word of God (as we do not dispute but every thing in this creed is so) yet, if on the one hand, our understanding is unfruitful, or on the other our tongues are directed to say, what our charity would willingly incline us to forbear saying; in our humble opinion it might be better to leave out (¶),
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(¶) To prevent misconstructions, it is proper here to observe, that it is not our judgment or desire, that this creed should be left out of the book. That, we apprehend, would on many accounts be wrong; nor can we by any means consent to its exclusion. And we have the pleasure to find, that many truly good men, and unquestionably orthodox sons of the Church, are of the same judgment with ourselves in this matter; who would have this creed still retained in our Liturgy, tho' not enjoined to be read, as it is by the present rubric. For they freely own, that if it were not in already, they should not be for introducing it; as apprehending we might do as well at least, if not better, without it. But being in, they would have it retain its place quietly and unmolested.—But then, will there not (it may be asked) be a seeming impropriety in retaining a formulary, which we do not use? For to what end or purpose should we retain it, if we never read it?—We would answer with becoming candor and gentleness. 1. To testify our regard to the judgment of the Church, which hath so long retained it; and to that of many good men therein, who are for having it still retain'd. 2. To prevent further uncharitableness and breach of union, on the account of a creed, whose exclusion would probably be resented and opposed by many. 3. That all persons, who desire it, may have an opportunity of seeing in one view, what is the sum and substance of the ancient catholic doctrine, in opposition to heresies and heretics, ancient and modern; and that they may also be satisfied, that the Church of *England* has not yet rejected that doctrine, since she retains it in her liturgy, tho' she does not think fit to enjoin it to be read, because she would keep all things quiet, and prevent all unnecessary disturbance.—But still, would not this be new and unprecedented? No, we have our thirty-nine Articles commonly inserted in our Liturgy, (we mean bound up with it) and yet do not read them in our churches,

than retain what is thus offensive to the one, and uninstruative to the other. And it would seem a kind as well as just part in our Governors, to pity our ignorance, and relieve our scruples.

Now whether our arguments on this head are just (as we think they are) or whether they will strike in with the sentiments of any, but those, who are of an humble, candid, and very charitable mind, is by us, with great evenness of temper and submission of judgment, referred to the event. We design nothing derogatory to this creed, unless it be this, if this be so, that we desire it may be omitted. Where the harm would be of omitting, or, if our Governors chuse, of not insisting upon the reading of it, we ingenuously own, after repeted consideration, we cannot yet discern. And could we discern, we would not request it. We are greatly mistaken, if our Church or Faith would suffer by such an al-

churches, as a common confession of our faith. We retain likewise our book of homilies, which contains the doctrine of our reformation; and yet even this doctrine also is seldom, if at all, read in our churches. Nor do any find fault, that these two Systems are not read.—But lastly, Will not the benefit of the *Athanasian* creed be lost to our congregations, if we do not read it therein? The benefit they have now by reading it, will be lost, and no more: And we conceive that benefit is ordinarily very little, if any; as we have intimated above.—So that, upon the whole, we are humbly of opinion there can be no harm in consenting to the moderate proposal we have made. However, we do not obtrude this opinion, but leave it freely and fairly to others to judge of. And may all others (we pray from our hearts) consult the peace and benefit of the Church, as much as we do. If we are mistaken in the measures we propose, it is the error, not of our will, but of our judgment. For we sincerely declare, we mean for the best, and have long considered about the justness of our meaning. The more we consider, the more we are convinced, that what we propose is just and rational. Nor can we as yet foresee any ill consequences as likely to ensue, any more than there would have been at first and since, if there had been no *rubric* prefixt to this creed.

allowance. And without pretending to be wise above men of recondite learning, any more than we wish them, or any others, to be wise above what is written, we hope and also believe our Church and our Faith would be considerably benefited, if a just allowance was granted.

We know many are of a different opinion ; and amongst them, some, for whom we have the highest esteem on account of their learning, piety, and other valuable qualities. Nor is it our intent by this proposal (which we are sensible touches upon a very tender point) to give such worthy persons the least offence, if we can well avoid it. Nor indeed is it owing to any degree of disgust, or in the least to a spirit of opposition, but on the contrary to that of peace and candor, and of charity (as we understand that word) in its just latitude, that we make the proposal. For with respect to our own sentiments, if they shall be expected or demanded, we are free to declare, that we are of the judgment of those learned men (θ) of our Church, who consider all the inter-

(θ) Among others, Archbishop Synge in his *Plain and easy method*, &c. where, in the appendix, he gives a large paraphrase on this creed ; and p. 54, observes that the word *necessary* very often imports not an absolute and indispensable necessity, but only that such a thing is a duty, and consequently that the act of assent can be no farther a duty, than as he has explained it in that treatise. His Grace also notes in the same page, that what in the *Atbanasian creed* we translate, *Before all things it is necessary*, is in the Greek, *πρὸ πάντων χρὴ* ; which implies something less than absolute necessity. Mr. *Wheatly* (in his book on the Liturgy, chap. 3. sect. 15, as also in his *Lady Moyer's lectures*, Sermon. viii.) is of the same judgment with this eminent Prelate, and assures us, the illustrations in this creed are not of equal importance, or of equal necessity to be assented to, with the grand doctrine itself, viz. the doctrine of the Trinity, or the catholic faith concerning it, in its main and fundamental articles. And Dr. *Bennet* (in the appendix to his treatise on the common-prayer, No. 3.) hath laboured very strenuously in the proof of
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intermediate illustrations of the great doctrine of the Trinity in the body of this creed, in much the same light

this point; shewing (p. 272, &c.) that in the use of the Athanasian creed, we do not declare, that the belief of every proposition thereof is necessary to salvation; and that such a particular belief is not thought by our Church to be necessary to that end. And he cites great authorities to this purpose; such as Archbishop Laud, Dr. Hammond, Bishop Pearson, and Bishop Stillingfleet. To which we may add, upon the authority of Mr. Wheatly (L. M. lect. p. 394.) the Commissioners appointed to review our Liturgy in the year 1689; who were men of great learning and judgment as well as temper.

We might descend yet lower, and observe, that even in the late unhappy controversies relating to this creed, several of its greatest advocates have made sufficient concessions in favor of the point we are upon; especially so far as relates to the vulgar, who are the persons we have here principally in our view. We have just now before us, *The Athanasian Creed a preservative against Heresies*; which for the present will save us the trouble of looking into other writers, since the learned Author quotes the principal of them, and particularly that great and good man, the late Dr. Waterland, the ablest defender of this creed, and of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, that perhaps ever appeared upon the stage of controversy. As to the Author himself, he very justly owns, p. 32. that *the vulgar are not ordinarily required to trouble their heads about the several circumstances and appendages, the several technical terms and phrases, contained in the Athanasian creed; nor need be under any concern about adjusting the sense of the terms, person, substance, co-equality, &c.* And God forbid, says he very candidly, that we should say, that the eternal salvation of every plowman and mechanic depends upon them. And, p. 37, applying to the writer he opposes (author of an essay, with which we are entirely unacquainted) he asks, *Does he sincerely and honestly believe the doctrine of a co-equal and co-eternal Trinity, three persons and one God, and of a God incarnate? If he does, he believes all that the Athanasian creed professes; since these are the main articles contained in that creed; and the additional passages are designed to preserve these articles pure and free from corruption.* All which, intirely coincides with what the Gentleman very rightly observes in his preface, p. 5, viz. *In that creed we only profess our belief in the general doctrine, as it is taught in Scripture; not presuming to know more than is revealed to us.*—Then, as to Dr. Waterland, he quotes these declarations from him, which well enough agree with our purpose, tho' it is not pretended they agree with any proposal for dis-

light, as they do a sermon upon a text of Scripture. Which, say they, being only an illustration, does not require our assent to every particular of it upon pain of damnation, tho' every tittle of it may be true. Nor do they think it is required by this creed, that we should believe the whole and every part of it on such peril; or, that there is a necessity laid upon us by the Church, to believe the *explication*,

tinuing the use of the *Athanasian* creed. P. 31, &c. *It is enough for any plain Christian to know or believe, that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are properly divine, are not one the other, and yet are one God, by an intimate union; and that the Son in particular being God and Man, is one Christ; and he is not ordinarily obliged to be more minute in his inquiries, or to understand scholastic terms. And again, Let common Christians [some will be apt to ask, Why not all Christians?] be content with every article of faith in its native simplicity, as laid down in Scripture, for edification of the faithful; and not as it appears in controversial books, or confessions, with all its armor about it, for the conviction or confusion of gain-sayers. See also this Doctor's commentary on the Athanasian creed. p. 262, of Crit. Hist. 8vo. And Mr. Needham's considerations concerning Church-divisions, p. 7. Both which authors exactly agree in what they call the moderate opinion, viz. the same, which is asserted at the beginning and in the progress of this Note.*

Here then, on the whole, is abundantly enough for our purpose; since the only point we are concerned in is, that the learned and minute explications in this creed, according to the confession of the best and most orthodox judges, are not absolutely necessary to every one's salvation. And, by the way, if not necessary to the salvation of every one, why to the salvation of any? And if so, — but the consequence from hence, as it appears to us to be plain and rational, we shall urge hereafter. Mean while we recommend to the consideration of every sensible man, and every serious inquirer after truth, the late Dean of St. Patrick's excellent sermon on this subject, printed by Doddsley; and conclude with those admirable words of the late Archbishop Wake, which we hope will make impression upon every reader, viz. 'Let us be careful to search out, and ready to embrace the truth, wherever we find it. So shall our lives be orthodox, tho' perhaps our faith should not; and if in any thing we do err (for we pretend not to infallibility, nor is it therefore impossible for us to be mistaken) yet at least we shall not be heretics.' *Defence against the exceptions of Monsieur de Meaux*, p. 104.

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that is there given of the main doctrine of the catholic faith.

But then we beg leave to argue from these and the like concessions, that, if they be just, as we believe they are, our proposal, to speak the least, seems the more pardonable; and (may we not also venture to add?) has the greater right to be considered. For, if there is no necessity of believing every part of this creed, where is the necessity of enjoining every part of it to be read? And how will it seem consistent with common ingenuity, or with Christian prudence and benignity, to insist upon the reading, and confessing as our faith, what at the same time we confess (as our Authors do many things in this creed) not to be necessary objects of our faith, and consequently not necessary as such to our salvation? (1)

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(1) We do not pretend to say, nor do we indeed think (at least we are not as yet sure) that there ought to be no articles in a creed but what are necessary to salvation. It is manifest, and it is allowed by all men of learning, that every article even in that called the Apostles creed (especially as we now have it, with the additions of later ages) is not of this grand and most interesting concern.—There is no need of saying more; nor should we have said even this, but to save some people a trouble they are but too fond of giving themselves, when they think they can discern any little inadvertency, which it may be to their purpose to take advantage of. It is this, that frequently occasions dispute where there needs be none. For men might oftentimes understand one another much better than they do, if they would. And many peevish, needless, fruitless controversies might be prevented, by making only a few grains of allowance in some cases, in others overlooking some less material errors, and shewing equity, good-nature, and Christian temper in all.—This note is introduced more for the sake of making this remark, than for that of making any apology for ourselves. For we apprehend our meaning is sufficiently evident, and as sufficiently unexceptionable, where there is but candor enough to take it right. For which reason we do very freely, as we may very safely, trust it with men of discernment and ingenuity.

May there not then be some middle way found out, which shall accommodate the difference between serious people, and yet retain the substance of the *Atbanasian* doctrine? For this seems the next thing to be inquired after, supposing the concessions we have mentioned, to be just ones.

It would, very likely, by many, tho' not by all, be thought too presuming in us, to offer a mediating scheme to this purpose. We shall therefore offer none here, tho' we may have been free enough, after an humble manner, to do something in this way on some other occasions.

We think it proper however to give our own sense (since it may be expected of us) relating to the main articles of the *Atbanasian* creed, and what we believe to be the grand doctrines of the catholic faith.

Now we apprehend the substance of this controverted formulary, and the great essentials of our catholic Christianity, may be sufficiently comprehended in the following declarations; which we presume can give offence to none, who believe the Scriptures, or regard our Liturgy.

I. That we believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: In the Father, who created us; in the Son, who redeemed us; and in the Holy

And if there should be others, who will not be so civil as to allow us to understand our own meaning, or understanding it, to have put our question right; we shall very contentedly submit to their censure, 'till they shall be pleased to oblige us with their sentiments upon this other question, *viz.* Whether it would not be well, if no creeds contained any other articles, but what are necessary to salvation?

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Ghost, who sanctifies us: And that, by the confession of a true faith, acknowledging the glory of the eternal Trinity, we do in the power of the divine Majesty worship the Unity.

II. That Christ, the only begotten Son of God, did for us men and for our salvation, come down from heaven, took our nature upon him, and was made Man; being born of a pure Virgin, and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin.

III. That in our nature he suffered and died for us.

IV. That he rose again the third day from the dead: Ascended into heaven: Sitteth at the right hand of the Father, God almighty: And shall return to judge all men at the last day; when there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, and all shall appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.

V. That thereupon the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

VI. Finally, that he who believeth these things, and is baptized into this faith (living according to it) shall be saved; and that he, who believeth not, having sufficient capacities, and proper evidences laid before him, shall be damned.

This, we think, is the sum and substance of the catholic faith, founded upon catholic principles, agreeable to the word of God, and the doctrine of the church of *England*. Nor can we help thinking but such a confession as this may be sufficient to all orthodox, charitable, and Christian purposes. And yet

yet we willingly allow all others their full scope in thinking and declaring, according to their better information, and clearer conviction.

2. The next particular we shall take notice of, shall be our *Catechism*: which having as little in it to disgust, and as much to commend, as perhaps any summary of this kind, shall be dismissed with a short query or two. For we shall only ask,

(1.) Whether the judgment of those worthy members of our Church may not deserve to be attended to, who, not without reason, think this catechism somewhat defective in some points, and to want a little explanation in others? May it not then, by a few gentle touches of some masterly hands, be amended and improved in these respects, and thereby rendered one of the most perfect of the sort, as designed for beginners? And since this catechism was designed at first for beginners only, namely, for young children, and the Church intended to have provided another for the instruction of youth and more adult persons; which yet was never done, and publickly authorized; we may therefore very properly ask,

(2.) Whether it might not be supposed to be of considerable use, if a form of instruction was drawn up by authority fitted for such a purpose? — Might not, for instance, a *larger catechism*, compendiously exhibiting the chief points, and principal evidences, of the Christian religion, be thought of eminent service in this respect? Suppose we had (as the Bishop of *Man* has for the use of his diocese) a catechism of this sort, to prepare our young people and others for confirmation? Which institution, by the way, is, and ever will be, of the greatest service to the Church of *England*, when duly prepared for,
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by a regular and constant course of catechetical instructions, suited to the age and capacities of the candidates for that primitive ordinance. If our right reverend Diocesans shall be pleased to unite in enjoining and enforcing this necessary duty, in all the churches within their respective districts; that most useful ordinance will soon recover its ancient credit and efficacy; and the ignorance in divine things, so generally and so lamentably prevailing among our lower people, and making them an easy prey to seducers (x) will, we hope, by degrees, wear off, and the power of religion, together with the knowledge of it, make equal advances in the minds of men.

(3.) The various *Collects* of our Liturgy may likewise deserve consideration: For tho' it must be owned, and is by us owned with the greatest pleasure, that there are several excellent ones (λ) among them, such

(x) It is too well known, and too sad to recollect, what advantage has of late years been taken of our people's ignorance, to draw them over to infidelity, popery, and almost any thing but Christian principles, and sound doctrine. Witness the large number of converts in our great Metropolis only.—Might not this have been prevented?—But how, and by what means?

(λ) We believe the Christian world was hardly ever blessed with a more valuable set of collects, than are some of ours; so plain, so beautiful, so harmonious, and withal so nervous, in the expression; so just in the sense, so comprehensive in the matter, and in every part of the composition, so delightfully affecting to a pious and good mind. Tho' we will not take upon us to say, that all and every one of this distinguished class are incapable of improvement (for we believe some of them are,—but from the best hands only;) yet we shall venture to say, one can hardly meet with any thing more perfect of the kind, than are several of these, which we shall here mark out; viz. the collects for the first, second, and third Sunday in *Advent*; for sixth Sunday after *Epiphany* (which, by the way, tho' one of the best, is seldom read) for the *Quinquagesima*, *Ash-wednesday*, *Good-friday*; for the second, third, and fourth Sunday after *Easter*; for the fifth, sixth, seventh (and perhaps also for fourteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth,

such as are scarce capable of any improvements, and are no where excelled, if any where equalled, by any compositions of this kind, that we have seen in any other liturgies ; yet there are others, and those not a few, which seem very much to want that perfection, which we see in these, and do earnestly wish to see in all. For we desire, that all of them may be rendered as perfect as they can well be made ; and, as far as that can be executed, that all may have equal degrees of perfection given them.

The general observations, which we hear some of our Divines, and other proper judges, make concerning such of the collects, as they think want amendment, are these.—It is allowed, in the first place, that the matter of the several petitions contained in them, is good ; but then it is observed, that the petitions are sometimes too general, and expressed with too much brevity, especially consider-

teenth, eighteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-second) Sunday after *Trinity*. Also those for the following festivals, *St. Stephen*, *St. John Baptist*, *All-Saints*. Nor are these others much inferior, if at all so ; viz. the collects for *St. Thomas*, *St. Paul*, *St. Matthias*, *St. Mark*, *Sts. Philip and James*, *St. Barnabas*, *St. Bartholomew*, *St. Michael* and all *Angels*, *Sts. Simon and Jude*. We might point out several more, but leave every one to judge according to his own taste. Some are very proper introductions, as others may be for conclusions, to all our prayers. Others again are no less proper in petitioning for pardon and grace. Several are very apt intercessions for all mankind, and for the whole Christian Church, &c. One (viz. that for the second Sunday in *Advent*) contains a most pertinent address before reading or hearing the Holy Scriptures. And perhaps it may not be very easy to assign a reason, why that admirable collect should be used only before the epistle and gospel of that day ; when it might, in our humble judgment, be no less proper before the reading of our Lessons, or any other portions of Scripture, that are appointed to be read with the same view, in our divine service. The like observation, in different respects, might hold good concerning some other collects, according to their different subjects.

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ing the solemnity of the introduction and conclusion of each collect; which are kept asunder from each other in some, by but a very small and inconsiderable interstice.—It is added under the same head, that many Collects contain but one single petition, alike short, and of a like general nature with those now mentioned: Nor do some petitions of this kind seem to be of such high importance, as to require a distinct collect to exhibit them in.—It is also observed by some, that the connection between the introduction and the petition subjoined to it, is not in all collects so clear and so obvious as might be wisht.—And lastly, it is questioned by others (who are supposed to be very good judges) whether there is indeed any real connection at all between those introductions, and what they are sometimes premised to usher in. (μ)

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(μ) They refer us in particular to the collect for *Easter-day*, as an instance of this inconNECTION; and think the collect for the day before (viz. *Easter-even*) to be a much more proper one for this day; supposing at the same time, that the other for the foregoing Sunday, which had been used all the week excepting on *Good-friday*, might very well serve anew on *Easter-even*. They also observe, that the sublime entrance of the collect for *Easter-day*, (which has now nothing to correspond to it in the sequel) would be far better answered than it is at present, by being prefixt to part of that for the preceding day. As thus: *Almighty God, who, through thy only begotten Son Jesus Christ, hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; grant that we, by continual mortifying our corrupt affections, being buried with him, may, through the grave and gate of death, pass to our joyful resurrection, for his merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, &c.* Several other instances of this kind, pointed out to us by these ingenious observers, might be here set down: But we conceive this specimen may be sufficient; and shall only desire the curious, who have opportunity, to take notice of the *first* collect for *Easter-day*, in the first Liturgy of *Edward VI.* For it seems they had then *two* collects for that day, one to be read in the *first* service, without repeting it again in the service at the altar; the other (which is that we have now for both) to be read at what they then called the *first communion*.

We cannot here but take notice, that there was an excellent beginning made towards the improving of some collects at the last review (v), which we wish had been carried on with respect to all that should have been found to want such improvements. But why the Commissioners stopt where they did, we are at a loss to know, and can only conjecture.

nion. The former collect is a very proper one, and seems much preferable to the latter. You have it in *L'Estrange*, ch. 5. p. 115.—Having occasionally mentioned two collects for one Festival, if ever it should be thought proper to have two for that of *St. Peter*, we think we could point out a very suitable one, (*mutatis mutandis*) which hath been left out of all our Common-prayer-books ever since the first review under King *Edward VI.* And that is, the collect for *St. Mary Magdalene's* day. Which since it may be seen in *L'Estrange*, *Wheatly*, and other ritualists in almost every body's hands, need not be here set down.

(v) Dr. *Nichols's* account and judgment of the matter. is this; Speaking of the Commissioners; *pergebant deinde collectas—epistolis & evangelis congruentius adaptare. Ac sane quam optimis auguriis huic operi doctissimi viri accesserunt, aliquot preculæ* [he still means collects] *ab iis tum composite, documento sunt. Si, per totum anni circuitum, his curatissimis laboribus percurrissent, vix aliquid haberi poterat politius, ac omni numero expletius.* Appar. ad def. Eccl. Ang. p. 63. He there tells us they improved several collects between the second Sunday in *Advent* and the *Epiphany*; and it is plain they made some intirely new. Any one, who will look into the old Common-prayer, may see what they struck out, and what they mended; and what need there was for their doing both. The former collects were some of them very low, flat and jejune, in comparison of those we have now. *Lord, wee beseech thee, giue eare to our prayers, and by thy gracious visitation lighten the darkenesse of our hearts by our Lord Jesus Christ; third Sunday in Advent. Grant us, O Lord, to learne to loue our enemies, by the example of thy Martyr Saint Steuen, who prayed for his persecutors to thee, which liuest, &c.* With which words the collect ended, (*viz.* that for *St. Stephen's* day) adding no more, and leaving the Minister to supply the remainder after *liuest*. In the collect for *St. John the Evangelist's* day,—*that it beeing enlightened by the doctrine of the blessed Apostle and Evangelist John, may attaine to thy everlasting gifts, through, &c.* Many other collects wanted a review as much as these, and do so to this day.

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There was also after this, about the beginning of King *William's* reign, a noble preparation made for improving these formularies, and making them every way more complete than they are. But this design also miscarried, tho' for a reason, which we are a little better acquainted with, than we are with the other. (ξ)

After these more general observations, we must now take notice of some particulars, begging leave to propose these few queries about them.

(1) Is there, in the nature and reason of the thing, any necessity of our repeating the same collect twice over, as we do the first for our morning service on all Sundays and Holidays? Besides, we sometimes repete two (ο) collects in that service, one for

(ξ) One cannot but be grieved at the want of success, that attended this excellent undertaking, when he reads these words of Dr. *Nichols*. *Collectæ in totum anni cyclum de novo elaborantur, ad epistolæ & evangelii doctrinam congruentius factæ; & cum tantâ verborum elegantia atque splendore, tantâque Christianæ mentis vi atque ardore compositæ sunt, ut nihil possit animos audientium magis afficere & accendere, & eorum mentes ad Deum evehere.* Def. p. 95, 96. And he acquaints us what hands were principally employed in this part of the work, viz. those great men, the most consummately qualified for the purpose, Archbishop *Tillotson*, Bishop *Stillingfleet*, Bishop *Burnet*, and Bishop *Patrick*. Could our collects have failed of being brought to the utmost perfection by such hands as these?

(ο) On *Good-friday* we repete three; and some seem to be of opinion, that we ought to repete two more at the same time, viz. the collect for *Ash-wednesday*, (which the rubric tells us is to be read every day in Lent, after the collect for the day;) and that for *Palm-sunday*, being the Sunday immediately preceding. Nor will they allow, that it is altogether a clear case, that we ought not to repete this other collect then also; since another rubric informs us, that the Sunday-collect is to be used *all the week after, where it is not otherwise altered*; and they find no order to the contrary, in relation to the present day. — As for the collects we repete on *State-festivals* and *fasts*, which are usually

for the day, and another for the season, and that in a close succession one after the other.—We are not unmindful, that we have given intimations of this before ; yet do humbly hope, that our renewing them here may appear in a somewhat different light from that of reiterating our collects ; and that the occasion for doing the one may possibly be a little more just, being an application to Men, than that for doing the other, being an address to God.—We also very well know the Scripture-instances usually alledged in favor of this practice : But it is easy to observe, that the parallel does not hold, when examined with that impartiality, which becomes men of reason, and lovers of truth.

As we earnestly desire, that controversies may not be renewed, much less perpetuated, about such things as these ; we hope our indulgent Governors, who have it so easily in their power to put a fair and amicable end to them, will think it becomes their prudence to do so, by condescending to a review, and to the making of all needful amendments, and that as soon as may be. Mean while, we for our parts, and all others who are like-minded, will learn anew as well as we can, the doctrine of acquiescence and filial obedience ; and endeavor to improve in it, with the greatest alacrity, in hopes of such paternal and not long-delayed condescension. Nor shall we be thought by candid men to run counter in the least to such a doctrine by remonstrating and beg-

usually two, and those of considerable length, it may seem the less obvious to account for the enjoining of two such collects to be repeated, unless we suppose, as in all reason we ought, that the several services are intended to be performed at so many several times. But then this will be no excuse for our present manner of performing them ; since, if this be the case, the repetitions we make, and consequently the incongruity of them, is chargeable not upon the Compilers, but upon ourselves.

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ing redress. For this is the duty of subjects, and is allowed them under all gentle Governments.

(2.) May it not be observed, that many of our collects are very improperly introduced, with regard to place and matter? As to the *matter*, is it always adapted to that of the Epistle and Gospel, of which they are said to be the collected substance? And as to the *place*, where they are brought in, do we not sometimes, if not very often, find, that they are brought in very incongruously, and out of proper order and season? Suppose we take notice only of the collect for the tenth Sunday after Trinity, to give a small sample out of many, that occur? In that collect, as in several others, we beg almighty God to attend to our prayers; *and, that we may obtain our petitions*, that he would *make us to ask such things, as shall please him*; &c. Would not any one here think we were just beginning our prayers, and going directly to ask those things, of whatever kind, which we judge to be *requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul*, according to the exigencies of both? But instead of this, our introductory collect proves to be in some sort a concluding one, and we enter immediately after upon the Epistle and Gospel, which lead us into another contemplation. Then follows the Creed, the declaration of holidays, and other things appointed by the rubric, 'till we come to the end of the service; wherein we are disappointed of our expectations, or find very little to answer the exordium we have made.——May not this observation, *mutatis mutandis*, be applied to many other collects? We leave indifferent men to judge. And it will be easy to discern, upon the most cursory survey, whether the observation be just.

(3.) When, on some vigils or eves of festivals, we are directed to read the collect for the ensuing day,
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and therein (tho' it may perhaps be night) to call it the day then present, [*this day* (π)] giving it the same title on the day following also, viz. the festival itself; is this agreeable to our common notions of a day and a night, and to our common way of speaking about either in like cases?—The learned Mr. *Johnson* (ρ), we know, makes a distinction in this case, agreeable enough to his great learning; and it is indeed the true, the only answer, that can be made in defence of our Church, in this particular. But the misfortune is, that learning and common sense are very often two different things; and all the learning in the world will not easily persuade our common people, that to-day is not to-day, and to-

(π) Thus in the collect for the day of the *Purification*, which hath an Eve; *That as thy only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple, &c.* And before the last review, the collect for the *Nativity*, which also hath its eve, was thus worded, —and *this day to be born, &c.* though the same collect was to be repeated, as it is still, every day successively for six days after; eight days in all, including the Eve. So that supposing it to be true, that every Feast-day continues from even-song to even-song inclusively, yet it cannot be so, (nor could it have been justly urged in those times) that it continues for eight days together, as if all made but one day. —However it came to pass, that the thing was not every where alike done, it is certain our Commissioners, at the review, declared their willingness to rectify every incongruity of this sort, and to order, *that the words* [*this day*] *both in the collects and prefaces, should be used only upon the day itself.* Concession IV.

(ρ) In his *Vade mecum*, ch. 22. Our ecclesiastical day, says he, *begins at six in the evening, &c.* And therefore where evening-prayer is read at its proper season [which he says and proves to be six a clock, as the time to begin morning-prayer also is six, tho' scarce observed any where but in our Colleges,] the collect for the *Purification* may well be used, as the rubric directs, on what we call the foregoing evening; notwithstanding those words, *thy only begotten Son was this day presented in the temple.* He speaks to the same purpose again, in his *Addenda* subjoined to *The case of a Rector refusing to preach a visitation-sermon, &c.* p. 106, 107. And his observations are really very curious and just in both places. Nor was any man a more accurate judge of such things as these, than he was.

morrow,

morrow, to-morrow. Besides, we are *Englishmen*, and not *Jews*; and consequently not obliged to compute after the *Jewish* manner. Nor doth the civil State, that we know of, require it, whatever the Church may. But pray, is there any express declaration of the Church, that the next day begins on this? As to intimations to this purpose, we do not dispute them; for we ourselves have given an instance hereof. And if a declaration should be produced, it will only inform us of what we did not know before, or had not so particularly observed. Which we shall reckon no shame in matters of this minute kind, heartily wishing, that every thing little and insignificant, and tending more to minister questions than Christian edifying, were fairly dismissed, and allowed no more place in the great business of religion; and that Christians would discern more and better, wherein the true spirit and essence of it consist. The former too often evaporates into mistaken zeal, the latter dwindles into little circumstances; and both are lost in the conclusion, through some unhappy mismanagement on this head. May these things some time or other be considered by wise and public-spirited men, true friends to the religion of Christ, and no less friends to the Church of *England*.

(4.) There is another instance not unlike the foregoing, which may admit of an inquiry. Our two particular collects for morning and evening, as we now use them, are commonly thought to be guilty of a bold catachresis. *Lighten our darkneſs* (c), when most

(c) If it should be supposed, that the words are meant of *spiritual darkneſs* (which is the only supposition, that can be made in their favor, on the present footing) we must take the liberty to observe, that this is one of those many vulgar errors, by which the intent of the Common-prayer is perverted. Had the words

most commonly, or very often, it is not dark : And, *who hast brought us to the beginning of this day*, when we are brought near, if not quite, upon high noon ; nay, and sometimes past it. For our Morning-prayer in most places begins much later, and our evening one much sooner, than was at first intended. The words, we readily allow, were very proper at first, but are scarce so now, as we now usually apply them. The Church undoubtedly intended, that people should begin and end the day with prayer. This very naturally, and without torturing her expressions, accounts for those sentences in these two collects. But on any other supposition, we must have recourse to intricate criticism, hard labor, and far-fetched expositions, to account for her words.— Now after these observations, our query shall be a very short one. Should we not either return to the first usage ; or else alter the words a little, and make them more apposite to our present practice ?

N. B. That the collect or prayer, which seems to make it matter of *great marvel* (τ), that some sort of persons

been meant of spiritual darkness, it would have been easy to have expressed them so ; as—*Lighten the darkness of our minds*, or the like ; and our best commentators would have asserted that to be the sense. But we see they do not ; and the true account, undoubtedly, is that which Dr. Bennet gives us, in his note on this collect, p. 86. *The Church*, says he, *in this collect alludes to that darkness, which is either actually spread over us, or very near approaching, when the evening-service is used.* The evening-service is used, in very many places, and perhaps in most, especially in the country, either at or soon after two of the clock in the afternoon ; and that, even on the longest days in summer. Consequently the charge above alluded to, is verified.

(τ) It is a new and singular way of defending this expression, to quote *Psal. cxxxvi. 4.* in support of it ; viz. *Who alone doth great wonders, &c.* Is not this, we beg to know, an abuse of Scripture ? And ought not such a practice of retailing it by piecemeal, in favor of any propositions we may be singularly fond of,

of persons should have grace (for so many do and will needs understand it) is by us purposely passed over, tho' it is hoped it will not be so by our Governors, whenever they shall think fit to engage in a review; since people will always be more apt to catch at the sound rather than the sense, and shew themselves more fond of a meaning that appears upon the surface, than of one, that lies so much out of sight. And besides, it is not every one, that can discern connections with the same readiness, that the learned can. And yet the Common-prayer is for all; not less for the service of the meanest peasant, than it is for the comment of the greatest clerk.

5. If the *prayer for the High Court of Parliament* shall be thought to require a review, we humbly submit it to our Governors to consider, wherein it may chiefly want amending. The expression, that is most excepted to, is very well known, and needs not here be specified. It might perhaps have been better, if it had not been put in at first; and it is certain there was no necessity of inserting it. Whether it may not now be exchanged for another epithet, which shall be less exceptionable, is a ques-

of, to be discountenanced and discarded? Is it decent to trifle thus with sacred matters, and apply Scripture so promiscuously to points it has no relation to, and was never intended to confirm and prove? A fault this (we are sorry to say it) which too many zealous but injudicious persons have been guilty of; but which we suppose it cannot much become any men of reason to imitate them in. Nor ought the vulgar to be misled and prejudiced, by detorting Scripture, for their service, to a wrong purpose; which is either supposing or keeping us still in a state of childhood. And yet a large volume, published some years ago in defence of our Common-prayer, consists of little else than such quotations as we have mentioned. The Bishops, and other Delegates at *Westminster*, in 1641, had reason at least on their side, when they made this modest observation; *In the prayer for the Clergy, that phrase perhaps should be altered, viz. Which only worketh great marvels.*

tion we would only propose, and leave the resolution to proper judges; tho' we think we could place the matter in such a light, as would evidence the necessity of attending to such a question. Right reason would suggest to us, to be very sparing in compliments, when we address the DEITY (v): And the less we use, undoubtedly the better.—The sentence, it is thought by many, would be sufficiently complete, without the expression.—Or supposing it would not; yet they think the requisite supply might very easily be made; and that, not only without giving offence, but so as to answer the purpose better.—*Most gracious protestant King*, or some expression of the like import, would be founded upon many weighty reasons, which every protestant Sovereign and Subject must approve of. We only mention the thing, and leave serious men to judge.

(v) To soften this matter a little, and give it a different turn, we know it is sometimes said, that the expression is not to be taken in the highest sense, which it may import in common language, being designed only in a political one, &c. To which we shall only say,—Whether it be right in the sight of GOD, to speak unto GOD, in common prayer, in any other sense, than the common sense of a common language, as it is commonly 'understood of the people,' let wise men judge. And as to the sense of the more learned touching this expression, the various translations by them made, into several different languages, will shew what they thought of it. We have consulted most, if not all, the translations, that have been made of this prayer, since it was first introduced into our Liturgy (which translations, that we have seen, are no fewer than eight or nine, done into so many languages) and we find them all agree in the common sense of the word, without the least intimation of any other, or any sign, that the authors had ever heard of any other. So that the sense above-mentioned (which is the only one, that can be pretended, besides the true one) may well be supposed to be a modern refinement, and consequently insufficient with regard to the main purpose.

S E C T.

S E C T. VII.

Queries and Observations relating to the several Offices, &c.

THE several distinct *Offices* of our Church seem next to demand our notice. We shall not be nicely scrupulous about placing them in the same order, in which we find them set down in our Common-prayer, (for that doth not seem necessary to our design) but shall take the liberty to range them in the order we shall think proper for our purpose; which is a liberty no one can take offence at in the present case, as it can no way affect the (φ) *Liturgy* itself, or the order therein established.

I: For our *Litany*. We have before observed, that this office seems to come in somewhat unnaturally, or not very agreeably to the rule of right order, in the place, where it is usually introduced. At the Lord's-prayer, and versicles after the Creed, we begin our devotions anew, and proceed properly enough through a few collects and prayers; which,

(φ) We must here occasionally observe, that there may possibly be some good use in *varying* the order a little; because some of our commentators seem to have been much too nice and particular, in assigning the reason or reasons, why every distinct office is placed exactly where it is, and no where else. in the Common prayer: Which we presume is more than they can be sure the Church intended; since we know she has not always kept to a rule in this matter. For it is observable, that at different reviews, she has taken the liberty to transpose some of her offices: Which she ought still to be at liberty to do, whenever she shall see reason, notwithstanding the over-meddling officiousness of commentators; which seldom has done much good, and too often has done hurt, in such cases.

one would naturally expect, we were going to continue on, in a regular course : But here, to the surprise of one unacquainted with our offices, we stop short all of a sudden, and, as if in the midst of our petitions we bethought ourselves of somewhat we had omitted, and saw, that we had begun wrong, we go back again, and begin afresh, entering upon a most solemn adoration of the Deity, as if we were now but just preparing to engage in his worship. It is difficult to see a reason (and may perhaps be impossible to assign a just one) for this piece of conduct. To say, that this is a distinct office, is only confessing the impropriety, without removing the cause. And to say the Church intended otherwise at first, is but owning we are now in the wrong, by deviating from the first intent of the Church ; which we ought certainly to keep to.

However, we will offer a query or two with regard to the office itself. This office, it must and will be owned by all sober and good men, is upon the whole a truly valuable one. But we must beg leave nevertheless to ask, Whether it may not deserve a review ? May there not be some things in it, which may be thought capable of emendation, or to require better improvement ? And would a few alterations here and there, done with judgment and candor, and with all the caution that may be necessary, impair the beauty, or diminish the solemnity, of this valuable office ?—Examination of particulars, and observation upon some instances of supposed misconduct in the reading of it, (for that also has been complained (x) of) will best inform us upon a review, whether there may be any just ground for these or the like queries. For tho' we decline

(x) See Dr. *Bennet* on Com. Pr. p. 94. Note 1. Also *Wheatly*, p. 170.

specifying the particular instances, which we judge may want revising ; yet we cannot suppose the Convocation will overlook them, when they shall once be heartily inclined, and duly commissioned, to undertake such a work.

2. We would with the greatest reverence pass over the *Communion-office* ; being indeed, as in its subject, so in its composition, a very solemn and important one, and framed with the greatest piety and gravity, mostly according to the pattern of the ancient Church. And yet there may peradventure be room to consider about this office also. Some few things in it may possibly be improved ; some particulars added, some retrenched, and the whole rendered still more conformable to Scripture and antiquity.

The particulars, relating to this office, which are thought to deserve consideration the most, are the following.

(1.) The *Exhortations* ; in some of which are divers expressions, which seem much too harsh, and, instead of encouraging to the communion, may be no small occasion of deterring men from it.

(2.) The *prayer for the Church Militant* is supposed to want some additional clauses in the business of thanksgiving.

(3.) The observations, that are sometimes made concerning our want of a prayer, or else petition, for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the elements, are well known ; which yet we only mention, because we do not see the necessity of such an address in the same light, in which others may.

(4.) It

(4.) It has been wished by many very considerate and pious members of our communion, that the words at the delivery of the elements were either shortned, or else not enjoined to be repeted so often; since by this means the holy office is, as they think, unnecessarily lengthened, and that sometimes to a very immoderate degree, especially in most of our greater churches in *London*, and other populous cities: whereas, if there were no such injunction, it might be dispatched in much less time: Nor would the zeal and piety of the congregation, it is thought, suffer the least diminution from making the office shorter, by a discreet omission of what seems in itself to be so little necessary or essential to it, and is now so inconvenient in the performance of it.

3. As to the office of *Confirmation*, we can say little to it at present; only that the rendring it somewhat more solemn and affecting in itself, as well as in some circumstances attending the performance of it, might do the institution much honor, and make it far more efficacious, than it is usually found to be. Several worthy Bishops have expressed their wishes for some few amendments and better regulations; and have shewed by their practice, what regulations and amendments they thought necessary, in order to answer the ends of this excellent institution.

4. The office of *Matrimony* may deserve some consideration, whenever the Liturgy shall come under a review. The more natural and simple our offices are (↓), if attended with proper decorum, the

(↓) *Ritus Christiani sunt pauci, simplices, innocui, &c. Officiis religioni, ut mihi videtur, quodcunque est superfluum. Quippe quod imminuit vim & curam cæterorum, &c.* T. Burnet. de
fid.

the more approveable and beautiful in themselves, and the more productive of esteem and of piety in the worshippers.

The objections to some parts of this office have been often exhibited, and as often disregarded. If they have been justly disregarded, and not merely for the sake of avoiding alterations, or for fear of yielding too much to petitions (*u*), we have no more
to

fid. & offic. Christianorum, cap. 5. [Caput sanè aureum; quod utinam legat integrum Christianus quisque cordatus, quin & relectum sæpius relegat.]

(*u*) One would have thought, that so moderate a request, as that for altering the word *worship* in this office, might at least have been granted, and that with much safety. But we find the Commissioners hesitated even at this, and in the conclusion refused to comply. Once indeed they seemed inclinable to grant the small favor, that was requested. For in their paper of *concessions*, they expressed some willingness to admit the word *honor* in the room of *worship*; and it was expected they would have done so. But why they did not, after they had gone so far as to put it among their concessions, remains to us a mystery. Bishop *Cosin*, who was one of their number, makes no scruple to declare, that in his judgment *the phrase (as now usually understood) being not so consonant to religion or reason, requires some consideration, that it may be explained.* With submission, why not rather altered? Since substituting the plain word *honor* may at least be as proper, as explaining the more obscure word *worship*. Learned men undoubtedly can put such a gloss upon the word, as shall appear plausible; but so long as it retains its plain, natural, and common meaning in the *English* language, that meaning, do what we can to suppress or forget it, [like that of *most religious* in another place] will always be uppermost in our thoughts, whenever the word comes in our way. Nor will plain, illiterate people, left to themselves, and their own natural and genuine conceptions about this matter, ever be able to invent any other meaning, which they shall think to be a just one. And it is apparent, that some, even of the learned, (*Petilius* for one in his *Greek* translation, and, if we mistake not, the author also of one or more of the *Teutonic* translations) have taken the word in the same sense, that the unlearned do. — Now since common prayer ought always to consist of the plainest and most significant words, and those to be understood in their most obvious

to object, and are very willing the office should continue as it is. But if alterations have been made
in

obvious sense, according to common acceptation; it would seem much better to change a word (whether of ambiguous meaning, or grown obsolete and uncommon through disuse, and consequently either way improper) than to be at the pains of illustrating and defending, time after time, and all perhaps to no purpose in the end, unless it be to perplex the understanding, more than to enlighten it.

When therefore words and phrases, how venerable soever for their antiquity, are observed to have lost their original meaning, or to be justly liable to misconstruction; why should it be judged to be less prudent to alter them, and more prudent to retain them? It may, perhaps, be difficult to conceive a reason for this piece of conduct; which some have not scrupled to call a mysterious, others a wayward one. Our ecclesiastical Governors have been sometimes more candid, at other times more tenacious in this respect. At the last review, they seem to have been extremely upon the reserve, *even in things, that* (as Dr. Nichols supposes) *might have deserved consideration*; refusing, at the request then made to them, *so much as the change of deadly sin, in the Litany, into heinous sin.* Our Reformers, at the first review, shewed a different temper. Of whose conduct Bishop Cofin gives us the following instance. *In the first edition of the Common-prayer book under Edward VI. the name of the Mass (as the Liturgy was then commonly called) was retained. But when men, who were leavened with the doctrine of the Papists, detorted it to a wrong sense, it seemed good to the Bishops, that in the second edition of the Liturgy it should be omitted.* Note in Nichols's appendix. p. 36. There was indeed an instance not unlike this, where our Commissioners, at the last revival, consented to change a word, that in the common acceptation was understood in a popish sense; and that was *penance* in the collect for St. John Baptist's day; which they altered into *repentance*.

There are many more words still remaining, (and it is upon the account of such words, taken all together, that we thought it proper to add this Note) which deserve alteration as much as *that* did. Dr. Bennet hath pointed out a great number; and both he and Dr. Nichols have shewn by their Notes and paraphrases, that they were not very intelligible without such illustrations; the latter, in particular, acknowledging very frankly, (as he was a person of great ingenuity) that *there are some* (he might, perhaps, have said, many) *things* in the book of Common-prayer, *which are not so clear and intelligible, at least to ordinary persons*, if they are always so, even to the learned. And
he

in other offices, where the occasion and expediency might seem not so great, there is room to suppose, that

he observes justly enough, that *the very language itself may be very well supposed to be altered somewhat* (yes, surely, and altered much) *in an hundred and fifty Years*; which was the computation at the time, in which the Doctor wrote; and now it is well-nigh two hundred years since the book was first published. For it came out at first in 1548-9, or much thereabouts.

Now to give a few instances of words in our Common-prayer, that carry a different sense in our common language, from what they do there: What ordinary man, accustomed only to our present *English*, would conceive any other sense of the word *before*, than the common one? And yet, in some parts of our Liturgy it signifies *against*; as *against* also sometimes signifies *before*. Who again (or how few at least) would have thought, that *judgment* signifies *mercy*, or *favor*; almost directly contrary to the common Sense of the word; that *health* signified *salvation*, or *safety*; *wealth*, *prosperity*; *righteousness*, *mercy*; *prevent*, *go before*; that *deadly* signified *heinous*; or *healthisful*, *holy*; that *quick* imported *living*; or that *lustily* was put for *skillfully*, or else for *diligently*? And not many in comparison, as we suppose, will imagine, that by *Curates* are meant *Incumbents*; which Dr. Bennet (note to p. 73.) tells us is the sense of the word, [we presume he means the *only* sense] according to our ecclesiastical laws. Nor are those old Saxon words, *fain*, *leasing*, &c. very well understood by ordinary persons, when they hear or read them in our Churches.

We shall conclude this Note with an observation of the late most learned and judicious Dean Prideaux, who very well remembered the bigotry that appeared in the Year eighty-nine, and since; and we conceive he alludes to what he had seen in former and later times. Having observed, that 'it was the superstitious folly of adhering to old establishments against reason, that produced the absurdity he had pointed out,' both in the *Magian* and in the *Roman* Liturgy; he adds, 'And if that stiffness of humor, which is now among too many of us, against altering any thing in our Liturgy, should continue, it must at last bring us to the same pass.' For all languages being *in fluxu*, they do in every age alter from what they were in the former; and therefore, as we do not now understand the *English*, which was here spoken by our ancestors three or four hundred years ago; so in all likelihood will not our posterity, three or four hundred years hence, understand that, which is now spoken by us. And therefore should our Liturgy be still continued without any change or alteration, it will then be as much in an unknown
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that the bestowing a few alterations on this will be attended with as little harm, as it has been in respect of those others, which have had that favor done them.

5: The office of *visiting the sick*, every one will allow, is very imperfect, and has often been taken notice of, as wanting several very considerable additions. For in a variety of cases, that are many of them very common, and some of them very urgent, there is no provision made by the Church; nor is any allowance given to the Ministers of it to make such provision themselves, by the use of any other forms, but those that are prescribed by law (α).—It has also been observed, that there are some parts of this office, that ought to be re-considered, as well in respect of matter and expression, as of the authority given to the Minister in a case, that is supposed to be more than commonly nice. In the cases we have alluded to, it is thought his authority is too much circumscribed; in this, too much extended. We presume not to interpose our own judgment, in an affair of so critical a nature; chusing, for the sake of peace, to leave it as we find it.

‘ language, as now the *Roman Service* is to the vulgar in that ‘ communion.’ *Connex. part I. book 4. p. 311. ed. 1725.*

(α) Indeed Mr. *Wheatly*, and many more, are of opinion, that the Church, by her 67th canon, allows a licensed preacher, on some occasions, to use a form or order different from that, which is prescribed. But this is undoubtedly a mistake. For that canon speaks only of *instructing* and *comforting* the sick; which we allow may be done by a preaching Minister, in such a manner, as he shall think most needful and convenient: But as for *praying* in any other form in such cases, the canon does not make the least allowance; nor does any other part of the constitutions of the Church, that we know of, make any. Mr. *Boswell*, in his *method of study*, vol. II. p. 124. will support us in this assertion.

6. It

6. It seems highly proper, that women *delivered from the great pain and peril of child-birth*, should return public thanks to almighty God for their safe deliverance. This, our Church hath piously ordered, and hath drawn up a very proper office for the purpose; withal pointing out the propriety of such women's joining in the holy eucharist, when they come to give thanks in the public congregation. And we have observed in some churches, that this office is still read (as perhaps it was in (β) all churches formerly) at the eucharistical table; the women, for whom the office is performed, there attending, and paying part of the homage due to the Almighty upon that occasion. We wish all such persons had both an inclination and opportunity to render that homage more complete by partaking of the holy eucharist; and consequently, as we have elsewhere intimated, that the celebration of it were more frequent in all our churches. Nevertheless we do not desire, that any should join in this solemn action, who are not meet to join; or that any should be put upon the duty against their will. The Church does not intend this now, whatever it may have done formerly in some cases (γ). And it is certainly better and more adviseable, that all should be left to their free choice in such matters. Else, religion being forced (δ), the intent of it is perverted, and the benefit of it lost.

As

(β) Vid. *Wheatly*, p. 523, 524. And *L'Estrange*, ch. ii. p. 327.

(γ) As in the rubric at the close of the office of *Matrimony*, which stood thus 'till the last review; *The new-married persons, the same day of their marriage, MUST receive the holy communion.*

(δ) There is indeed another rubric still in force, which says, that *every parishioner shall communicate at the least three times in the year*; and the 21st canon speaks to the same purpose. The intent of the Church herein was unquestionably a good one.

But

As for the office itself, it seems in the main to be free from exceptions, and we have little or nothing to query upon it; only we could wish, that whenever it shall come to be revised, we may have the pleasure of seeing it improved in the *psalm* and in the *collect*. Would it not be more proper, for instance, that the former should be made up of several select portions of scripture, suited to the occasion, and well connected? as the hymns for our state-festivals and fasts are; and which, by the way, are observed to be drawn up with great elegance and propriety. And might not the latter, tho' a very proper one, be rendered still more perfect, by a few pertinent improvements? And suppose the *Lord's-prayer*, having been said so many times al-

But experience shews, that both the canon and the rubric are ineffectual, and can never answer the end they were designed for. No more, we presume, could a law, (if such a law were made) which should oblige all sorts of persons receiving any office from the State, to partake of the communion before they entered upon such office. Would not some disservice be done to religion by such an injunction? The Church, we see, has altered her rubric about communicating, in the case of persons newly married, because she found it to be an inconvenient one. How far she may have it in her power to alter any other injunctions of this kind, which may be equally inconvenient, we are not able to say; nor would propose the abolishing of any, that the wisdom of the legislature shall judge to be necessary, any more than we would the retaining of any, that shall be found to be incommodious. All that we take upon us to say (and we shall not scruple repeating it) is this; that every act of religion ought to be left free, and none forced to any act of it, which they are not of their own voluntary motion inclinable to perform. The Christian religion is a perfect stranger to all force, and even absolutely forbids it, in every kind and degree, because it is inconsistent with the nature and end of all true religion, and destructive of its power. That declaration of *Tertullian* will always stand, and always be regarded by wise and good men, as being founded upon right reason and truth; *Sed nec religionis est cogere religionem; quæ sponte suscipi debeat, non vi.* Ad *Scapul.* c. 2.

ready,

ready, should be omitted in this office? Would the office be incomplete without it?—We easily foresee, what men inclined to cavil will say to our frequent mention of this excellent prayer. But our frequent mention of it is owing to our frequent repetition of it. And if that be not thought a sufficient excuse, we freely own we have no other to make; nor should think it necessary to offer any other, supposing we had any better than this to offer.

7. As to the office of *Infant-baptism*, we have only this to remark; that many things in it are of very obscure meaning, and doubtful interpretation; which it is not easy either to explain satisfactorily to men of common understanding, or defend with success, against men of subtle and shrewd reasonings. And as to the frame and design of it, the office, in the judgment of many, seems much better adapted throughout to the state of adults (ε'), than to that of infants: Which we believe any sensible and unprejudiced man will, upon an attentive survey, be easily convinced of.

Whe-

(ε) ' I remember (says one of our correspondents) that when several years ago I had some conversation with the learned Dr. Waterland, upon the subject of the *Baptismal office*, he freely owned to me, that he supposed the Compilers, in the drawing up of this office, had a view to *adults* as well as to infants. And I have observed since, that our Reformers, in one of the rubrics of their first Liturgy, speak of grown children being brought to be baptized, as a thing usual and intended by the Church; and in their book entitled, *Reformatio legum ecclesiasticarum*, Tit. de *divinis officiis*, c. 9. give particular directions for *preparing children for baptism*; which may in some measure corroborate the observation, which that learned person made to me.'—To which we may add, that long before our reformation, the council of *Winchester* (in the eleventh century) ordered, that *baptism should be administered only at Easter and Whitsuntide, unless the person's life was in imminent danger*. On which Mr. Collier, in his *Ch. Hist.* Vol. I. p. 249, makes this remark; ' that it is probable, if the acts of the council were extant, we should find, that none but *adult persons* are comprehended under the meaning of this canon.'—It

Whether, or how far it will be prudent to attempt, or feasible to effect, a just alteration in this office, and reduce it to a proper standard, is not for *us* to say, and is left to better judges to consider. But we have seen a *specimen* to this purpose, handed about among friends, which seemed, in a very natural and easy manner, to remove all difficulties; yet still retaining the substance of the present office, and proceeding mostly upon the plan of it. We had it lately at our option to insert that specimen in this work; but chose, for some reasons, to decline the friendly offer.—If indeed it should be found by degrees, that particular inquiry should be made after it by honest and worthy persons, our advice to the proprietor was, and is still, that he would be pleased to consider about a proper method of communicating it to some few of the principal members of the Convocation; submitting it wholly and freely to their judgment, and leaving them to make what use of it they shall think proper.

We now beg leave to propose a few *queries* upon the subject to that discreet assembly, and such other judges, as shall think fit to inspect these papers.

(1.) We desire it may be considered, whether it may not be adviseable, either to review and amend this office; or else frame a new one which shall be less exceptionable?

is further observable, that the last rubric subjoined to the office of the baptism of adults allows the office of *infant baptism* to used in some cases, when *persons not baptized in their infancy shall be brought to be baptized, only changing the word infant for child, or person, as occasion requireth*. It seems then, that the Church thought the office of infant-baptism suitable even to *adults*, or such as are past infancy. And, which may seem a little strange, the *Burial Office* (for the same reasons, we suppose) is ordered to be read at the interment of infants just baptized, in the same manner, as at the interment of grown persons.

(2.) Al-

(2.) Although we do not think the *sign of the cross*, or any other mere ceremony, that is in itself harmless, can deserve two words debate ; yet, for the sake of giving all reasonable satisfaction to persons, that may scruple it, we would humbly query, whether this signature might not be allowed to be omitted, when such persons bring their children to the font, and desire such omission ?

(3.) Since the office of *sponsors*, tho' antient, is now for the most part become matter of mere form, and seldom, if ever, answers the good purpose, for which it was instituted ; and since it is many times the occasion of offence, and does more detriment than service to the Church and religion ; on these and the like considerations, which are obvious to every one, that will take notice of what passes, it is humbly submitted to the wisdom of our Governors, whether this appointment of the Church may not, without inconvenience, be laid aside, and something better, and more likely to answer her intent, be substituted in its room (4).

(4.) Whether *private baptism* be founded upon

(5) If the institution must still be retained, yet may it not deserve to be considered, whether the *engagements* at least might not be put upon a somewhat different footing from the present ? Possibly a small relaxation may do no harm. Mr. *Wheatly* observes, that the godfathers and godmothers of persons baptized at riper years ' are only appointed as *witnesses* of the engagement, and undertake no more than to remind them hereafter ' of the vow and profession, which they made in their presence,' &c. *Append. 2. to ch. 7. p. 390.* And yet our *Catechism* expressly asserts (and repeats the assertion) that the sponsors engaging for *infants* engage, that they shall believe and repent. For the infants are said to *promise both* these things *by their sureties*. Which surely all rational men will allow may deserve to be re-considered ; especially since it is but too evident, that the pains of learned men to clear this point, has but involved it in greater difficulties ; and the declaration, after all, is really incapable of any other sense, than that, which it most naturally and obviously bears.

primitive antiquity, sufficient to give it a sanction, and recommend the continuance of it in the Church? —Whether it derives any real authority, or whether the supposed necessity of it appears, from any declarations of the New-Testament, rightly understood?—Whether it reflects honor upon our Lord's sacred institution, and the merciful design of his Gospel; or represents the goodness of God in the most amiable light, either to the more ignorant, who cannot, or to the more discerning, who can judge about these matters? And particularly, whether unbelievers have not too frequently and successfully made a handle of it to disparage our religion?—Whether it hath not sometimes, and perhaps very often, both before and since our reformation, been the cause of much superstition (u), as well among some of our higher, as among most of our lower people?—And lastly, since there are many other, and well-known inconveniencies, that attend this institution, as now enjoined, whether it may not, on the whole, be thought better to abolish, than retain it?

[As to the ministration of public baptism in private houses, we shall here pass it over without no-

(u) What degree of superstition, in relation to things of this kind, may be now remaining amongst us, need not be specified to any, who have opportunities of observing it: But what notions our forefathers, before the reformation, had of these matters, may in some measure be guessed at from this single instance, which we shall give our readers from Dr. *Watson's* Comp. Incumb. c. 31. 'In former times the necessity of baptism to new-born infants was so rigorously taught, that they allowed lay-people, and even women, [especially the Mid-wife] to baptize the declining Child, where a priest could not be immediately found: Nay, so fondly superstitious were they in this matter, that in hard labours the head of the infant was sometimes baptized before the whole delivery. —But we thank God our times are reformed in sense, and in religion?'—And yet it is thought by observing people, that there is room left for further reformation in both. Vid. *Wilkins's Leges Anglo-Saxon.* P. 93, 44. and p. 98, 10.

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tice ; as we shall also that other practice, founded upon equal reason and authority, the churching of women out of the church, or the solemnizing of their public thanksgiving in a private place and manner.]

(5). Supposing any unbaptized *adults* desire to be baptized in our Church by the rite of *immersion*. The Church, if we mistake not, allows this, when her rubric says, the candidate may be dipt (θ) in the water. If so, shall we not in most, if not in all our churches, find ourselves at a loss for a proper baptistery for this purpose ?

We hope the freedom of these queries will not be taken amiss, or interpreted to a wrong sense, by any, who shall consider them attentively, and without prejudice.

8. The *Burial-office*, (drawn up with such awful solemnity, and affecting piety) ought to be considered with much candor. And yet the greatest candor in the world will find it difficult to make a sufficient apology for some expressions in it, as they are now indiscriminately applied, and are ordered to be applied, to all, who do not die excommunicated.—We shall here declare our minds with some freedom, yet not without a sincere regard for the honor of religion, and the credit of our Church ; joined with every becoming desire of removing the difficulties and discouragements, that too often attend our inferior Clergy in the execution of their office, and more particularly in the case before us.

(θ) We take it for granted, that by *dipping*, our Church means the same, that the primitive Church did, *viz* a total immersion. If not, the word should have been explained. Compare the rubric in this place with that of the same kind for baptizing of infants. Also see *Bingham's Antiq. B. XI. c. ii. §. 4.*

To set the affair in a true light, let only one question relating to this office be admitted with condescension, and attended to with conscience.—Must this excellent office (excellent in itself, and admirably adapted to such deceased, as it was originally designed for) be solemnly read, we presume not to say, egregiously prostituted, over the remains of a notorious ill liver, or profest unbeliever? And whether there may not be some, if not many, of both sorts, in this age and country, we leave others to judge. If there be any, and if this solemn office must be pronounced over such indiscriminately, tho' they died impenitent, or gave no satisfactory evidence, or even signs of repentance, (which we have reason to fear is too frequently the case) we desire, and even beg, it may next be considered, *whether a serious, thoughtful Clergyman can in honor and conscience do it?* (1) And if he cannot, then—but we

(1) Tho' we have many clear and strong remonstrances, made by the Clergy and other members of our Church, in relation to this and other articles, which we purpose to set forth in our *appendix*; yet we shall so far anticipate our intention in *this* place, as to set down the following words of Dr. Bennet, which are uttered with great force, and seem to deserve no small attention. How far he is in the right, let our Clergy judge, who are particularly interested in the concern he mentions. If any of them think him wrong, it may be incumbent upon them, to defend the practice, which he blames. His words are these:

'Tis plain from the whole tenor of this office, that it was never intended to be used at the burial of such persons, as die in a state of notorious impenitence, without any appearance or profession of their return to God. So that those Clergymen (if any such there can be) who read this form at the funeral of the most profligate and debauched sinners, do not only act without authority, but against the manifest design of the Church. I hope therefore, that none of my Brethren will ever prostitute this excellent service to the worst of purposes, to the encouragement of vice, and the hardening of sinners; and that they will never change the whole of it into one continued and deliberate falsehood by so scandalous a misapplication.—

we forbear ; intreating men of discernment to judge of the consequence ; at the same time requesting, nay, conjuring men of power and principle, to take the matter to heart, and relieve the distressed.

This, in truth, is no trivial matter, nor can possibly be esteemed such by those, who can think, and are immediately and necessarily interested in the affair ; as every Clergyman (every inferior one at least) most evidently is.—We never yet met with any serious, considerate man amongst the Clergy, but what expressed his hearty concern, and therewith his earnest wish, that the Convocation (who so well know the grievances of their brethren, and may themselves have once felt them) would vouchsafe to take this matter into consideration.

Either then let the discipline of the Church be restored (if it be still possible to restore it) or else this office, which supposes such discipline still executed therein, be no longer enjoined, as of necessity to be used in all cases alike, when there is no discipline : And if we may be allowed the freedom to add, let

'tion.'——But then, should a query here arise, what is to be done with the corpse, how to be interred, &c.——So that it seems the matter is not yet altogether so disentangled ; since a struggle is like to ensue, between clear reason and conscience on the one side, and rubric and law on the other. A hard case this for certain ;

Born under one law, to another bound.

Since the worthy Doctor could not but have been apprized of this difficulty, we could rather have wished, he had given his application another turn, and directed it chiefly to the Legislature ; since the grievance he complains of, takes its rise from something, that is wrong in the Constitution itself, and can never be remedied, 'till that is altered. There lies the sore, and there ought to have been the application.

another office (*), we pray, be either substituted in its room, or at least subjoined to it, which may better suit such cases, as either suppose no discipline, or, if there be any left, are owing to a very unhappy relaxation of it.

Since our writing the foregoing observations, a very learned, pious, and judicious Divine, whom we thought proper to consult upon the subject, has favored us with his judgment, to the following effect ;—‘ That, for his part, he cannot see, why there ‘ should not be a general review :—that with respect ‘ to *this* office, he conceives it wants one as much ‘ as any ; yet agreeing with us, that the office in itself, and as it was at first designed by our Reformers, is truly excellent :—that he thinks it might ‘ be altered without any considerable inconvenience ; ‘ and, as he hopes, with general approbation.’—And particularly he owns, he ‘ sees no necessity of ‘ standing so long at the grave without, and thinks, ‘ that all the service, that is necessary, or can be useful, ‘ might very well be performed within the church, ‘ excepting the *sentences* to be used at meeting the ‘ corpse, and the form of committing it to the ‘ ground.’ And he seems to think it on many accounts adviseable, ‘ that none should be carried

(*) The Committee at the *Savoy*, in Sixty-one, composed several *new offices*, as well as new prayers, which we now have and use. It is hoped the same privilege may still be allowed a Committee, especially on so just an occasion as this ; an occasion, withall, so evident and so urgent. If not, may we beg at least, that the *offensive passages* in this and other offices may be either expunged, or else altered for the better ? Since it is evident to any common understanding (and every unprejudiced mind will own it) that after all the learned pains of our various commentators, the objections against them are not sufficiently answered ; and that there can be no other way of answering them to purpose, but by complying with the reasonable requests, that are so often made for a review.

‘ into

‘ into the church, when they are dead, who seldom
 ‘ or never frequent it while they are living ;’ making
 here a transient observation, both upon dissenters
 and absenters, but more especially the latter ; whom
 he thinks not worthy of any ‘ Christian burial at all ;’
 wondring at the same time, that our Church thinks fit
 to allow it them ; ‘ an ill-judged sort of indulgence,
 ‘ saith he, if I may be allowed to say it, and what I
 ‘ conceive does the Church no small disservice.’

As to shortening the office at the grave, he says
 he does not see it can be any way necessary to read
 much there. He allows it may be decent and proper
 to say something ; but questions whether it is
 always expedient ‘ to say all, that we do, and are in
 ‘ all cases alike enjoined to say.’ For, like a good-
 natured man as he is, he declares, he thinks the
 practice enjoined ‘ very inconvenient in many re-
 ‘ spects, and especially with regard to invalids, whe-
 ‘ ther young or old ;’ whose attendance at the grave
 in very unseasonable weather, and often at very
 unseasonable hours, (and the Clergy especially are
 obliged to attend at all seasons, in all weathers, and
 at all hours) may prove very prejudicial in respect
 of their health. Which, says he, it doth not seem
 very reasonable the living should be obliged to sa-
 crifice to the dead. And had the Church, he adds,
 thought fit to have enjoined a much longer service
 at the grave, the submission to her rules must have
 been equally due, both from Clergy and Laity (λ).

In

(λ) ‘Till the last review, *the whole service* (psalm, lesson and
 all) was appointed to be read at the *grave* ; and because that
 was the appointment of the Church, many out of the way rea-
 sons were sought for, as is always usual in such cases, to justify
 the appointment, and even to shew, if it had been possible, that
 it was an appointment consummately wise, and that a better
 could not well have been contrived. However, the Commis-
 sioners, those uncommon reasons notwithstanding, thought proper

In short, this very venerable and worthy Clergyman (who has the heartiest desire to see the Church of *England* flourish) thinks, that when we are come from the church, there needs no more in reason to be done, than rehearsing as appointed, *Man that is born, &c.* and, *Forasmuch as it hath pleased, &c.* and then subjoining, *The Grace of our Lord, &c.*

And in this case, if ever it should be so ordered, he hopes it will be judged proper (1) to transpose the sentence, *I heard a voice from heaven, &c.* from the place where it now stands, and set it among some of the first sentences, appointed to be said or sung *at meeting the corps*; since we plainly want some more sentences there, especially when the entrance of the church-yard happens (as in many places it does) to be at some distance from the church. And (2) to make a few small alterations in the words pronounced at the grave; where he wishes the valedictory form, (or that of committing the body to the ground) might be improved from the words used in *burial at sea*, and that instead of referring (as in the latter solemnity is done) to the *common burial office*, the form might be suited, as it easily may, to serve for both cases alike, with the variation only of one word; the whole form, for instance, running in some such words as these:

Since it hath pleased almighty God, in his wise providence, to take out of this world the soul of the deceas-

per to make some abatement of the rigor enjoined, and to acquiesce in a milder injunction. And it is hoped their successors, whenever they shall be lawfully delegated, will make still greater concessions; thereby evidencing at once their good sense, and good nature: Of both which they cannot give a fairer instance, than by removing all unnecessary burthens, and making religion look as amiable, as it is intended to be useful to mankind.

ed lying now before us ; we therefore commit—body to the ground [or deep,] to be turned into corruption ; looking for the general resurrection in the last day, when the earth and the sea shall give up their dead (μ) ; and expecting the life of the world to come, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ ; who, at his second coming in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and dead, shall change our corruptible bodies, that they may be like to his own glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.

The Grace of our Lord, &c.

We beg it may be observed, that the alteration here proposed is not intended to disparage any thing in either of our forms as they now stand, much less to preclude better improvements from abler hands, especially those, in which authority is lodged ; but to shew, how very easily these and all other forms, or particular passages, that seem now exceptionable, may be altered in such a manner, as to give general content, or at least remove the more common objections, and whatever is found to give unnecessary offence.

(9) The *Communion-office*, used once by the year, expresses a truly Christian wish ; but a wish (with concern we speak it) never hitherto obtained [but let it not be said, never *likely* to be obtained] in this Christian country, tho' it be a wish of near two hundred years standing in all our churches.—Where the fault really lies, that it is not obtained, we do not presume to say, because indeed we do not well know, and would not chuse minutely to inquire. But it is by sober men judged to be a sort of inconsistency at least (not to say, as some too ludicrously

(μ) *Rev. xx. 13.*

have

have done, a solemn farce) to wish, and not endeavor to obtain, if the wish be reasonable. And if the wish be not reasonable, why should we express it, as if it were such?

In the same office, (as also in all our offices of public humiliation) occurs an expression, wherein with united voices we are taught to make solemn profession to almighty God, that we do then all and each of us turn to him in "*Weeping, Fasting, and Praying.*" Abstractedly considered, we like the declaration well, as highly becoming a congregation of *devout Penitents* at such a time. Yet there may perhaps be room to query, whether this declaration (how well soever adapted to the dispositions and real acts of some *few*) may be deemed altogether so proper, as that every person, in a *mixt assembly*, should be enjoined to utter it before the great Searcher of hearts, and that in a manner, and on an occasion, so solemn and so awful.—We, who reverently suggest this query, have had occasions more than a few, of lamenting some instances we have observed at such times: For which and other reasons, we cannot but wish, if this matter shall appear to our Governors in the same light, in which it doth to *us*, that it were at least re-considered. Possibly it may both deserve and require some serious thought, and not misbecome the wisdom and piety of a Church like ours to consult about it.

S E C T.

S E C T. VIII.

Queries and observations touching a further supply of occasional offices and prayers. Also relating to the Calendar and Rubrics.

1 **W**E find it to be the judgment of many learned men of our Church, that notwithstanding the several offices she is already provided with (as recited in the preceding section) she has still occasion for more. And were it not, that this is thought to be a very material defect in her constitution, and that considerable inconveniences are observed to arise from such a defect, as also that we are desirous to see her constitution rendered as complete, as any human one can well be, we should scarce have taken upon Us to remind our Governors of a thing, whereof they have been so often reminded, by several of the worthiest members of our communion.

The offices, which are supposed to be chiefly wanted in our Church, and which, if they were inserted, would add greatly to the honour and usefulness of her Liturgy, are the following.

(2) An office for *excluding* unworthy members out of the Church. The want of some proper solemnity of this kind, to be performed openly in the congregation, to which the delinquent belongs, makes excommunication to be much less regarded, than it would otherwise be; since all, that is now dreaded, is but the loss of a little money, which the officers of the court claim for their fees. Nor is the nature of excommunication at all understood
by

by the generality of the vulgar, for want of some suitable provision to illustrate the design, and impress the terror of it more strongly upon their minds.

(2.) An office for the no less open *re-admission* of such delinquents, on their requesting it, and shewing all due evidences of their deserving it. The necessity and usefulness of such an office need not be explained; since every one, that will consider, may easily see, and will readily acknowledge it. And the common form in such cases (so lame and imperfect, so little affecting, and so little effectual) seems to be destitute of proper authority; since it does not appear to be enjoined by our liturgy, and is consequently liable to be rejected by those, who shall think fit to dispute its lawfulness, and will not please to go farther than the liturgy enjoins.

(3) An office for receiving *profelytes*. We leave it to proper judges to consider, in what particular cases such an office may be fitting and necessary. In some it undoubtedly may be both, but not perhaps in all that have been proposed. It will not be difficult for candid men to fix upon a reasonable medium between extremes. And men of wisdom will employ their candor as much as possible in things of this kind.

(4) We would place in the same light an office for the *re-ordination* of such, as have been ordained in another Church, and may be desirous to officiate as ministers in our own. As things are now usually stated, this point is rendered somewhat nice and critical; for which reason we do not chuse to enter into the discussion of it, being content with having barely mentioned it, and referring it to the consideration of judicious men.

(5.) It

(5) It seems pretty obvious, and is readily allowed by men of judgment, that we want an office for *prisoners for debt*; another for *criminals*; and another to be read at the *execution* of such criminals: We need not say how useful it would be to have proper offices for each of these purposes; since private persons, by drawing up such offices, and the public by receiving and using them, have given sufficient indications, how much they are wanted.

(6) A form or office preparatory to the due observation of the *Lord's-day*, and, we will add, to the due receiving of the *Lord's-Supper*, seems to be also wanted, and might at least be very proper to be read in our churches on Saturday-evenings. And were the Lord's-Supper always to make part of the sacred ministrations of the Lord's-day (as it anciently did; and as in reason it ought still to do) a form for this purpose might with great propriety and usefulness comprise what should be requisite relating to both.

(7) Lastly, the Church of England at the beginning, and several of her members since, have shewn it to be their judgment, that forms of family-worship, drawn up and enjoined by authority, might be of great service for the promoting of religion in families. For tho' the Common-prayer may have in it all proper materials for such worship, and many insist, that church-people ought to use no other form even in their families (which nevertheless may be modestly questioned, till it can be fully proved;) yet there are many reasons for wishing, that we had a particular form for this purpose, inserted and recommended in our liturgy. This, at least, would

put an end to dispute, and might be made extremely serviceable to religion. (v)

Men of experience and observation may probably think of some *other* offices that may be wanting, in our Church. But we judge it sufficient, for our parts, to have suggested these few hints. And every good man, who desires the improvement of this Church, in these and the like instances, will undoubtedly, on any public proposal made, communicate his observations with readiness, in order to do it the best service he can; leaving its Governors to judge concerning the propriety and expediency of what he offers, after he has respectfully laid his thoughts before them.

2. As it is the general opinion, that we want more occasional offices; so is it no less generally thought, by judicious men, that more *occasional prayers* might be of considerable service. And that such are wanted, will not, we suppose, be denied by any, who shall impartially review our liturgy, and observe the small supply we have of this kind, amongst the few occasionals, which the Church has hitherto provided.

It will perhaps be as needless, as it may on some accounts be unseasonable, to point out particulars, where the instances may be so numerous, and where a little recollection will so easily suggest them. We

(v) Amongst the several forms we have extant of family-prayer composed by private hands, those drawn up by the present Bishop of *London* for the use of the Parish of *Lambeth*, are deservedly reckoned to be some of the best. Were these or the like forms to be either enjoined or recommended by authority, and placed at the end of our Common-prayer (as such forms were formerly to the old one of Queen *Elizabeth*) we might hope a good effect would follow in many families.

shall therefore chuse to forbear specifying what may be so obvious, and what we imagine may with more prudence and success be presented to view, when a more seasonable opportunity shall offer. Mean while, we beg the candid attention of our Governors to a few remarks, which we shall take the freedom to offer, relating to the privilege of composing occasional prayers, in cases of eminent and evident necessity.

What we have often heard some very good men of our Church observe upon the subject, is to this effect; that it is much to be wished our Bishops were more at liberty than they are, to compose forms of prayer for their respective dioceses, to be used in the churches thereof, on any emergent occasions, that may happen within any particular district; or as the same may be more general throughout the kingdom.—Would it not be reasonable they should be allowed this Christian liberty, to provide for the flock over, which the Holy Ghost hath made them Overseers, under so solemn a charge, and with such a plenitude of commission? Surely there could be no hurt in intrusting men of wisdom and probity with such a privilege; since it could never be abused, or perverted to a bad end, if the forms prepared were first to be inspected and allowed by the State.—But as things are now ordered, we seem to have more than reason to complain to our Governors, and to beg they would take pity on our distressed condition, in such instances, as seem more and more to require it. To specify only one, which is but too evident to all, and will probably in time (unless the mercy of Heaven interpose and prevent) be but too sensibly felt by all;—the increasing distemper amongst our *cattle*.—What

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one prayer (v) to this purpose hath been publicly enjoined (how much so ever the poor sufferers and others have wished for one) during all the time this sweeping malady hath raged in our land, and made so many places therein desolate of cattle?—A sense of religion, in whomsoever it resides, dictates the propriety, the expediency, the necessity of applying to Heaven in such calamitous circumstances. —Our hearts are full : We forbear speaking more on this sad occasion !

Divers *other* cases might be intimated, which point out the reasonableness of making further and better provisions for the occasional necessities of the Church. They are almost always numerous : And as they are so, it would seem they cannot sufficiently be provided for, in respect of intercessions to an over-ruling Providence, but by allowing our chief Pastors the liberty we have mentioned ; a liberty, which we humbly apprehend, in reason, to be their right, their just and unalienable right, in consequence of their office.—The misfortune at present is, that where we most want their assistance, we cannot have it, or not so easily and speedily as our occasions demand. In case of any common calamity (to say nothing of any sudden disasters happening to particular neighbourhoods or families ; which yet may oftentimes seem to be severe enough to deserve our common regard) we are too frequently at a loss for want of some more room to acknowledge the justice of Providence, and express our common concern in a dispensation, which either already is, or may very soon prove common to us all.—It might seem to be some diminution of the honor of our Church (tho' we intend it as none) to observe,

(*) This observation was penned in the spring 1747-8, about three years after this murrain began to appear in *England*, and a little before the prayer for its removal came out.

that the toleration-ministers are allowed a privilege, and a very just one, which every sensible minister of the establishment would be glad to enjoy ; and which none could misuse, whilst under the direction of his Bishop, his Bishop at the same time being under the direction of the State.

This, as far as we can now readily recollect, is the only instance, wherein we have hitherto presumed to speak a little more freely (in relation to concerns of this kind) than hath been our wonted manner and resolution. It hath all along been our settled rule to be free, and yet candid. We hope we have not greatly, if at all, transgressed with regard to either quality, in the instance before us : And if we have, yet our business being with men of reason and consideration, we promise ourselves a ready pardon from such men ; since they cannot but see we mean well both to religion and the public, in every thing we have presumed to deliver relating to both. And indeed the interests of both are so invariably one and the same, that we hope both will be equally remembred, by those, who are alike intrusted with the care of each.

In the remaining part of this section, we shall beg leave to remind our Governors of two or three things more, which now occur to our thoughts, and plead for a specification, tho' we had once intended to avoid touching upon particulars.

(1) In the first place, if we should presume to say, that a prayer for the *Convocation* would be proper to be used in all our churches during their session, we should as little doubt of the approbation, as we would of the pardon of that venerable assembly ; nor should we fear the censure of any, who should disapprove of so benevolent a proposal.—
Our Convocation being the society appointed by

law to consult about affairs of religion, we may justly wonder, why this society is not particularly prayed for in our Church; especially since the Church is so nearly interested in the concerns it should meet about. And indeed it may deserve our very serious consideration, how far the present low estate, and little availableness of our Convocations towards reforming the Church, or doing it any useful service, may be owing to the Church's making no intercession for them in her public offices.— We submit this reflection to those, who can allow there may be some efficacy in the united prayers of the faithful. And tho' we can foresee some lesser objections, we chuse to pass them over, as we do many others of the like kind when they occur, because they would but needlessly detain us from pursuing our main intent.

(2) It is the judgment of many excellent men of this Church, that our liturgy is somewhat too defective in the great and delightful duty of *thanksgiving*. (ξ) It is true this hath been denied by others; and we may be sure nothing will too easily be allowed to be defective in such a book, by those who are pertinaciously bent to defend it. For they either indeed do not see such defect, or else are resolved they will not see it. However Bishop *Hacket* (and we need mention no other here) was not of their mind.

(ξ) Several instances might be mentioned, wherein it would seem very proper, that we had forms of thanksgiving;—as after *recovery from sickness*, or other affliction and danger, &c. But we leave these and like instances to the consideration of our Governors; only observing, that the short clause now transiently used in the general thanksgiving [viz. *particularly to those who desire, &c.*] seems to be less satisfactory, and less adequate to the purpose, than men of judgment and piety could wish; as also, that where it is brought in, the transition from it to the sentence immediately following, [viz. *We bless thee for our creation, &c.*] seems a little harsh, and the connection between both not to be so very natural.

For

For he saw the defect, and lamented it, expressing his wish, that our Common-prayer abounded more than it doth in forms of thanksgiving (o); which surely so reverend and wise a Prelate would not have expressed, if he had not thought he had sufficient reason for so doing.

(3) Since, notwithstanding the canon for bidding of prayers, it is still the judgment of many of the Clergy, that a *prayer before sermon*, drawn up by authority, and suited to the great design of such instruction, might on divers accounts be very proper and very useful; and since several of prime rank have formerly, and others do still recommend the use and expedience of such a prayer, by their practice; since also difference in judgment and practice on this head hath sometimes occasioned dispute, and the canon hath received different interpretations from men of learning (π); for these and the like reasons, it might not be unadvisable, if our Governors should think fit, either to adjust the matter with exactness in respect to the sense of the canon, or else compose a form of prayer to the purpose before-mentioned. Or rather, it would be an instance of great wisdom and moderation, after having done both, to allow a just liberty; leaving it indifferent, whether the form of bidding, or the form of praying shall be used, provided the one or the other shall be reverently done, by every minister before his sermon. This, it is probable, would prevent

(o) See his *Life* before his works, fol. 1675.

(π) The Bishops at *Westminster*, 1641; Archbishop *Usher*, Archbishop *Tillotson*, Archbishop *Tenison*, Bishop *Fleetwood*, Bishop *Trimnell*, and other Prelates and Clergy, on the one hand, (see also Bishop *Gibson's* Code, p. 306. *L'Estrange's* Alliance, p. 173, and 31; and Dr. *Watson's* Comp. Incumb. c. 31.) and on the other, Dr. *Stuart*, Dr. *R. Sherlock*, Mr. *Johnson*, Mr. *Wheatly*, &c. And you may see the sense of the Convocation of 1661 relating to this matter, in the *Acta Convoc.* of that year, *sess.* 40.

disputes, and make matters easy on all sides : Which is much to be wished, and is earnestly desired by all friends to peace and holiness.

Here we intended to have closed this section. But a late agreeable conversation has brought us under a new engagement. Two things have been urged to us, which are judged to be of some importance. We shall exhibit them, as near as we can, according to the words and arguments of those ingenious friends, from whom we had them.

The *first* relates to *women with child*, and drawing near their labor. For whose condition the Church having hitherto provided no prayer, these Gentlemen think this a defect in her liturgy. For, as they observe, it would seem very reasonable, that those, who after child-birth come to the church to give public thanks, should, before it, be there publicly prayed for, and that they should desire the church to offer up her prayers in their behalf, before they come to that labor, for the deliverance from which it is so very meet and reasonable they should afterwards offer up their thanksgiving.—It is true they may be prayed for in a general way, and often are at their particular request, especially in our capital City and other great places. But would not a *special prayer* for the occasion be lookt upon as a mark of the condescending regard of our Church toward such persons ; and also be apt to make greater impression both upon themselves and others ? Whereas when we have only a form of *thanksgiving*, (and that not more necessary after, than the other of *intercession* is before delivery ;) and when withal it is observed, that *the woman, that cometh to give her thanks, must offer accustomed offerings*, we well know what constructions are sometimes put upon such a rubric ; as well as what reflections on the account of

it are thrown upon the Church and her Ministers, by those, who are no great well-wishers to either.

The *other* point, suggested to us by our valuable friends is this; that we ought, they think (and many others are of the same mind) to have a *particular prayer* to be read in church, in behalf of the *sick*. Their arguments for this, be they more or less valid, you shall have fairly represented, and be left to judge of them as you shall see reason.

Mr. *Wheatly* (p) and other Divines tell us, that it is *needless as well as irregular* (c) (meaning in the church) to use any collects out of the visitation-office, when any desire the prayers of the congregation.— That it is *irregular* is readily allowed, because the practice hath no rubric to support it, and may per-

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(p) Append. to ch. 4. sect. 5. p. 187.

(c) It is matter of unhappy observation, tending neither to the credit of our Church, nor to that of its Ministers, that our Divines are frequently charging one another with *irregularity*. It is certain, that no irregularity is allowable in the Church, and less so in her Clergy, of all the members, that belong to her. But what is the irregularity, which the Gentlemen of the function are so forward to blame in each other? Irregularity of life and morals? We do not find *that* usually censured so much as one of another nature, *viz.* irregularity in point of form, or in a less exact observance of the canons and rubrics. It is confessedly a fault not to observe them, as things stand at present: But a fault-perhaps, in some cases, more excusable before God, than before men. The fault might be prevented in most Clergymen, by new modelling our rubrics and canons, and giving us a better and more rational set of both, than some of those we have now in force. Till this be done, we fear the complaint of irregularity will always subsist; and while it doth so, will continue to do great detriment to religion; as it alienates brotherly love, one of the distinguishing excellencies of the religion of Jesus; and as it produces *evil surmises* and *perverse disputings*, which are so contrary to it. In the mean time, we must beg a discreet cessation of irregularities on the one hand, and of complaints on the other. Let the brethren, who are supposed to be irregu-

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haps also be inconsistent with some rubrics, that are in force. Whether or no it is likewise *needless* (supposing there were no rubric to forbid it) is what we beg leave to discuss a little.—Allowing, as we have done, and are always very willing to do, that the practice may be somewhat irregular; will it therefore follow, that it is also unnecessary? What if the rubric will not permit the prayers of the office for the sick to be used in the congregation? Must therefore the poor sick people, when they desire it, not be prayed for at all in the congregation? “Yes, you will say, *there is a particular clause provided for this purpose.*” Confessed: But is there a particular *prayer* also provided? None, that we know of; and to the office, it seems, we are not allowed to go for such a prayer. What must be done then in this case, to supply the defect, if it be one? “The minister must say, that such or such persons desire the prayers of the congregation; inserting that clause (in the *prayer for all conditions*, &c.) *especially those for whom our prayers are desired.*” Short enough, one would think, and consequently not so affecting as might be wisht; nor indeed so respect-

lar, forbear recriminating (which we fear they sometimes do,) and, instead of that, humbly apply to their Governors for a proper remedy in cases, that require it. Let the brethren, who complain of irregularity, likewise forbear such complaints as much as they well can; considering, that they themselves also are in some points irregular, and *in many things offend all of them*. In-
 somuch that we may justly say, that in point of exact, precise, and strict conformity, to all and every demand of our canons and rubrics, there is not one Clergyman in the kingdom, who is perfectly regular and uniform, *no not one*. He, that thinks and knows he is so, let him be freely allowed to cast the first stone at his brethren, who are not so. Such a blameless and happy mortal, we believe, never yet appeared in the Church of *England*, or in any other Church in the world. And we may possibly shew in some subsequent part of this work, that it is morally impossible there should be any such, so long as the rules of conformity are so strict and so numerous. See Bishop *Bedell's* life, p. 146, 7.

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ful, as we apprehend, to the petitioning invalids; who might justly hope he would be more earnest in our intercessions to God on their behalf. "But we may be so in private, if we please." Undoubtedly; and we ought to be so in public also. But how shall we be earnest in public, if we have no public prayer suited to such earnestness; none answering to the enlarged desires of benign, benevolent, and sympathizing souls; or to the exigence of those, who desire us to intercede for them?—If it shall be said, 'that the design of the Church is only to recommend the afflicted to our *private* prayers,' we must beg leave to put in our caveat against the validity of such an assertion. For the clause in the Liturgy expressly says, *When any desire the prayers of the CONGREGATION.* And the prayers of the congregation, if any on this subject, are to be offered up in the church only. But where are those prayers of the congregation, or where is there any single prayer to this purpose to be met with, in the ordinary ministrations of the Church? Let us have but one good prayer, fully answering such purpose, and all will be well (τ).

(τ) Whilst the *Healing* was used, the prayer for the diseased was in these words: *O Almighty God, who art the giver of all health, and the aid of them that seek to thee for succour; we call upon thee for thy help and goodness mercifully to be shewed to these thy servants; that they being healed of their infirmities, may give thanks unto thee in thy holy Church, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The extraordinary application above-mentioned being now *disused*, an humble query, we hope, may be admitted; *viz.* Whether even this short prayer (supposing it allowed in the Church in the behalf of the *sick*) might not be preferable to the having none at all? At least, might it not be allowed to serve for a time, and 'till a larger and better were drawn up for this purpose?

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Let not any good minds be offended, nor any that are not of so good a turn, be incensed, if we venture to put another query.

When the *prayer for all conditions*, &c. is not to be read (as by the rule of Bishop Gunning, the supposed author, it was not intended to be in the afternoon,) what *clause* or what rubric have we, in any other part of our public service, relating to the sick and afflicted? None, that we can readily find: None indeed, that we can at all find. And the more is the pity. For surely there ought to be some provision of this sort. Common humanity, and Christian charity direct, that there should.—You will say, ‘they may be mentioned in the Litany.’ But are you sure you *may* do it, and that it will not be counted irregular to mention them there? If, according to the common practice, you introduce those words in the middle of the Litany, viz. *especially those for whom our prayers are desired*, adding presently after, *and young children*; we ask, (1.) Where is your authority or legal warrant for so doing? For such, it seems, you ought to have, for every thing you say or do in your liturgical ministrations. And it is indeed reasonable enough you should not be left too much at liberty. Nevertheless, there seems to be a middle way between all extremes. And such you may wish there was on this and the like occasions. (2.) Suppose you had authority; yet, is a transient *especially*, &c. sufficient for the purpose, when a poor fellow-being is in distress, and desires our earnest supplications?—Lastly, tho’ the observation may seem to be of little moment, it may nevertheless be worth considering, whether there is not a kind of force, or something of impropriety at least, in interposing the clause, that hath been mentioned, between the words, *sick persons*, and, *young chil-*

children. One may venture to say, it will not sound very musical to the ear, whatever it may to the heart. And we know some regard is due to the former, tho' much more to the latter.

Our freedom on this head, may possibly be supposed by some to be a little unwarrantable. We readily acknowledge we have been somewhat more free than is common with us, but cannot think we have been unwarrantably so, or that we have been more free than is justifiable in an affair of this nature. We own also, that, upon review, we began to think of expunging what we had written: But those excellent persons, to whom we are indebted for the remarks, would not suffer us: And we think we owe some regard to their judgment as well as friendship. However, we must renew our professions, that we always desire to be gentle and candid. And if ever we seem otherwise, as it is contrary to our original purpose, so is it to our settled temper. The gentleness of the gospel is still the favorite temper with us; and we constantly desire to be, and to shew ourselves possessed of it, *tho' we sometimes (we hope not very often) do thus speak.*

We had like to have forgot the two following articles. It may be sufficient just to mention them.

One is the revival of our *Calendar*; which, every man of judgment will allow, does greatly need revising and reforming. The observations upon the subject are so well known, that they need not be here repeated.

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The other Article relates to our *rubrics* (v), which have been long complained of by many well-wishers of the Church: Who observe, on the one hand, that

(v) That some of our rubrics seem to clash and interfere with each other, is an observation, that hath been made by several writers. To give a detail of their remarks here would be needless; but there is an observation of the late Dr. *Bennet*, in his book on the Common-prayer, which may deserve to be considered a little. In a note, p. 155, he animadverts upon the scrupulosity of those Clergymen, who think, that every part of the communion-office ought to be read at the communion-table. He confesses there are some expressions in the rubric, which intimate, that this ought to be the constant practice. But then he insists upon the contrary being the *allowed* practice; which, says he, *our Governors do never blame or endeavour to alter*. And an *allowed custom*, he thinks, *is sufficient to satisfy any man's conscience in this case*. As to which we have no debate with him, being inclinable to be of his opinion. But then, what he immediately subjoins, may bear some dispute, tho' we shall not stand to argue the case with him. *If an allowed custom* (as before) *be not sufficient; let the objectors consider, to name no other instances, how they can justify their tacking together the Morning-prayer and the Litany, which were intended and used as distinct offices in former times, and thereby repeating the prayer of St. Chrysostom, and 2 Cor. xiii. 14. but once. For there is no rubric, that dispenses with the saying them at the end of the morning prayer, when the Litany is used the same morning*. We have compared the rubrics, and find reason to suspect, that the learned Doctor may be mistaken in this point. Whoever looks into the old Common-prayer (that was in use before the last review) will find, that the morning-prayer on Litany days ended with the third collect. And Mr. *Wheatly's* observation, p. 165. amounts to no more than a conjecture to the contrary. Whatever was the practice 'till that time, it is evident, that our revisors formed the present rubrics relating to this matter, upon that practice, and upon some of the former rubrics; tho' they have not, we presume, been sufficiently careful to make their meaning clear, and to guard against all appearance of inconsistency; as we could have wished they had done, to prevent disputes.

But after all, these and the like strictures seem to be trifles in comparison of the great design of Christianity; and therefore we cannot but wish (as before) that our rubrics were a little better adjusted to serve that great design, leaving no room at all for those minute bickerings about things of little or no consequence

that we want several *new* ones, and, on the other, that those we have, call for a review, in order to explain, improve, adjust, and render them more consistent with each other.

S E C T. IX.

Some Objections considered. Correct printing of the Bible and Liturgy, &c.

WE have now gone thro' all that we proposed, and all we thought necessary to take notice of, relating to our *Liturgy*, and the *translation of the Bible*; the two great points we had principally in our view, when we engaged in this undertaking. In relation to both which, we have given our sentiments with some freedom, but such a freedom, we hope, as will appear to be every way consistent with moderation and decency, and with a true desire of doing service to this protestant Church.

We have but two things more to do, relating to these heads. The first, to consider some *objections* in reference to one of them: The second, to offer a *request* in regard to both.

1. As to the objections, *one* perhaps may be this;
 ' That several additions we have proposed to be
 ' made to our Liturgy, do not seem to be so agreeable to our desire of having it abbreviated.'—
 As our Liturgy now stands, they certainly do not;

quence in the end, and indeed obstructive of the chief end of religion. It seems really to be a shame, that Christians should make so much ado about lesser matters, neglecting the greater.

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but would be a means of lengthening it out to a still greater proportion, and rendering it more inconvenient than it is thought to be in its present form. But it is easy to observe, and will, we hope, always be remembred, that our request relates to the public service in *general*; which taken in such a view, and as compounded of a great variety of parts, we desire may, upon the whole, be rendered *shorter* and more *uniform*. And as to what we desire may be added to any part of it, this ought still to be kept within such bounds, as to be consistent with the main design, and with the obvious reasons of the request. Whatever additions we have proposed, we doubt not but our worthy Governors will think them, on the whole survey, to be reasonable. And we need not question, but if they shall think fit to enter upon a review, they will take care to contrive all to proper advantage.

Another objection, which we imagine may occur to the minds of some, may be to this effect: ‘ That the several articles we have been considering, especially in reference to the *Liturgy*, have been considered before by divers learned men; and that all the more material circumstances, relating to any of them, have been cleared long ago to general satisfaction.’ The inference from hence will be, ‘ that the present undertaking was unnecessary, and might much better have been spared.’

We know, that this is an argument, which sways much with many. To which when the authority of great names, and the weight of popular prejudice, are added, it seems to some to be an argument, that is unanswerable. And what is still worse, if worse can be, persons once prejudiced in favor of this argument, having settled their final judgment about it, and being convinced they are right, and cannot be

be wrong, will never after hear of any thing that can be said in abatement of its force, and commonly think, that nothing *ought* to be said, after such great authorities have given it a sanction.

This, it must be owned, is no small discouragement to every generous attempt to promote a reformation. And where this argument, being taken for granted to be valid, shall preclude all farther inquiry, farewell all hopes of farther reformation, how great occasion soever there may be for it. Nor would any reformation ever have taken place, either in this or in any other country, had this argument been of force enough to prevent it.

However, we desire to raise no contest about the matter, leaving every man in full possession of the opinion he has entertained of it, if he chuses not to alter such opinion, and to continue invariable in his adherence to what he has once received. Yet we would take the liberty, humbly to admonish ingenuous minds, not altogether to trust to the validity of such an argument; since it is at least possible, that in some instances it may prove deficient. And with regard to others, who may be less ingenuous, and more prejudiced,

*Hoc admonere simplices etiam potest,
Opinione alterius ne quid ponderent :
Ambitio namque dissidens mortalium
Aut gratiæ subscribit, aut odio suo.*

In short, we desire no other favor from any sort of persons, but candor and impartiality; begging only, that they would be pleased to take a fair review of the argument, and bestow upon it a very serious and very mature consideration. Which if they shall think fit to do, they will, we believe, no less

less oblige *themselves* than they will *us*, and at the same time do justice to truth, and to the subject before them.

If, therefore, on reviewing what we have written, it shall be observed, that the several arguments, which have been insisted upon, have any or all of them been considered already, and received a full and due answer; let that answer continue in full force, and all we have offered go for nothing. But if it shall appear upon a just inquiry, that some things we have presented to view, have never been presented before, or never in the same light, in which they have been here by *us*; and if it shall also be found, upon like inquiry, that several things have never been answered at all, and others but imperfectly at the best, notwithstanding the favorable reception, which the several answers have met with from persons predisposed to give them such reception: If all this, and a great deal more to this purpose, which we could point out, shall by impartial men be found to be true, (as we doubt not but it will upon re-examination) we shall then hope the pains we have bestowed upon this important subject, have not been altogether thrown away; nor shall we wholly despair, but some regard will be paid to our application, as being founded at least upon something of reason, notwithstanding the general prejudice; and as having perhaps more, and stronger, and fairer arguments urged in its support, than have hitherto been usual in the management of these topics.—It is also presumed, that the strength of prejudice, lying too much and too long in favor of received opinions about the several points we have been examining, may by degrees abate; and that mens minds gradually opening, and gently disengaging themselves from prepossessions, will at length be at liberty to give every argument a fair hearing, and determine,

mine, according as reason shall direct, and the evidence shall preponderate on either side. And since our appeal, in these disquisitions, has all along been to reason and evidence, we have no more to do than to refer men to these, leaving them to judge as these shall direct them.

2. With respect to the Bible and Common-Prayer conjunctly, we have an humble request to make in favor of both : And that is, that both may always be *correctly printed*. We think we have not only a Christian, but also a legal right to some care about this matter. And yet the want of such care hath been too often complained of (p) without sufficient redress.——When whole words are left out, others misplaced, and others altered, what shall the Laity think, or the Clergy do? Are the latter obliged in strictness to read these books in the congregation any otherwise than they find them printed? And if they read them as they find them, must they not oftentimes read them wrong? When they happen to do so according to the book sent them, where is the authority, that can justly blame, or legally punish them? For why are they printed so? And who gave them direction to read them otherwise than they are

(p) To make no other remonstrance on this head, Mr. *Lewis*, in his history of our translations, tells us, that *the Clergy of the lower house of Convocation, 1703, very justly took notice of the many typographical errata's in the edition of the Bible two years before,——complaining thereof in their humble representation of several gross errors committed in some late editions of the Holy Bible.* And, if we mistake not, the inquisitive reader will find more complaints to this purpose, and relating to incorrect editions of the *Common-prayer*, in Dr. *Wilkins's* History and Acts of our later Convocations. See the order of his late Majesty King George I. dated *Whitehall, Apr. 24. 1724.* to prevent abuses of this kind : Which is set down in *Lewis's* history above mentioned, c. 5. See likewise, the *Proceedings of the Bishops, &c. at Westminster, in 1641*, when these things were complained of.

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printed? But then at the same time, where is the honor due to our Bible or Liturgy, when either the one or the other is falsely read, as both are too frequently observed to be falsely printed? If this therefore cannot be supposed to be doing due honor, can it next be reasonably said to be doing common justice to either?—We hope, that what we have said upon this subject, may deserve to be considered; since wrong impressions of such books as these are attended with too many ill effects, as the least observation and reflection will convince any person, that is unprejudiced.

After all, we must not here forget the compilers of our common *Almanacks*, who too often would over-rule the compilers of our *Common-prayer*. Is it reasonable, that this sort of men should take such liberty, thereby misguiding the vulgar, and disparaging the learned? Why should they interpose their authority in determining *Easter-day*, and *St. Matthias's* day, when they determine both (as they sometimes do) in direct opposition to the determination of the Church? And of all things in the world, why should they settle the seasons of *Marriage*, allowing it when they please, and forbidding it when they please? Let our Canonists and Ritualists abet their cause, if they think proper; for the following are the definitive declarations of some of our almanack-composers; which we should have thought below our notice in such a work as this, but that they have misled many people, and are by many supposed to be founded upon some constitutions of the Church.

Times prohibiting Marriage.

‘ Marriage comes in on the 13th day of *January*;
 ‘ and at *Septuagesima-sunday* it is out again, till
 ‘ *Low-*

‘ *Low-sunday* ; at which time it comes in again, and goes not out till *Rogation-sunday* : Thence it is forbidden until *Trinity-sunday* ; from whence it is forbidden till *Advent-sunday* ; but then it goes out, and comes not in again ’till the 13th day of *January* next following.’

It seems somewhat surprizing to those, who read the New Testament, that such restrictions should be imposed upon us without authority ; forbidding to marry at certain times, which God allows at all times. What if there should be some old popish laws and canons forbidding ? Should they forbid, where God permits ? Or will a protestant Church abet a popish cause, against God, against Scripture, and against Reason ? It is better we should leave free, what God and Nature, and the Gospel have left so ; and that no intruders should deprive us of our Christian and just liberty.——If the laws of the Church are otherwise, it is fit they should be altered, because it is not fit they should be obeyed, whilst they are contrary to the laws of the Gospel, and to those of human nature. But we hope, and almost assure ourselves, that our present Church of *England* allows no ground for such arbitrary injunctions, and will never countenance any, that would bring us under the restraint of such encroachments (x).

(x) See the learned Mr. *Johnson*’s remarks on this subject, in his *Vade Mecum*, ch. 21. 5th ed. and the *Codex Jur. Eccles.* p. 518, &c. Proceedings of the Bishops at *Westminster*, 1641. Also Remonstrance, 1641, 4to. Archbishop *Laud*’s Answer to the Puritans, in defence of this prohibition. Dr. *Nichols*’s Supplement, append. p. 25, 26.

S E C T. X.

Queries and observations relating to Articles, Subscriptions, Homilies, Catechising, Canons, Oaths of Church-Wardens.

THE several heads here proposed may deserve consideration as much as any others; and it is hoped they will be allowed a fair one by all sufficient judges. We desire leave to present a few queries relating to each.

1. Are our *thirty nine Articles of religion* liable to no just and reasonable exceptions, when compared with the genuine sense of the Word of God, as that sense at this day appears to learned and inquisitive men, who have examined the Scriptures without bias, and are possessed of all proper qualifications to study them to advantage? Would it be impossible, or very difficult, to compile a system of divine truths, more agreeable to Scripture, and less burthensome to the conscience of sincere inquirers? And has it not long ago been, and is still judged, by some of our wisest Governors in the Church, that the present times require a different set of articles, and better adapted to present exigencies? tho' for the sake of peace, and of the true interest of the Church, we shall always wish they may be drawn up with a just latitude, as well as with a sincere regard to Scripture-truth.

It may not be improper, nor will, we hope, be offensive to observe, that there are instances to be found in the Christian world, of Churches, which require *no* tests of this kind, and yet maintain such
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an harmony of belief, in things essential to the Christian religion, as is experienced to be a solid foundation for peace and unity, and prevent much dispute and controversy, by gently removing the occasion. Happy event! May our Church in time (if the wisdom of Providence shall so permit) be fixt upon such a just and solid basis, as may render it *a city at unity in itself, and an example of praise in all the earth.*

The learned societies of this land, intrusted with the education of youth, will excuse our taking notice, in this place, of a remnant of the old popish imposition, said to be still retained in some of them. For it seems it is a settled order in one or more of these renowned bodies, (who have happily discarded some other inconvenient customs) that every one of above twelve years of age shall at admission subscribe our thirty-nine articles.—Indeed, to propose tests of this kind to the fair consideration of grown men and able scholars, may not perhaps in every case be unjustifiable. But that they should be proposed to mere novices, and much more *imposed* upon the impuberty of their understanding, can scarce admit of any favorable, because scarce of any reasonable construction. For is not this supposing them competent judges of what they subscribe to? And yet, in subscribing to our articles, they subscribe to some of the most abstruse points of theology, of which it is morally certain they cannot be competent judges (↓); since even men of advanced age and learning cannot sufficiently agree about several of them,

(↓) Let it be but impartially considered, whether any raw youths (some of them perhaps scarce instructed in the first rudiments of Christianity) can be sufficient judges of the following articles, to mention no others; *viz.* Art. 3, 8, 9, 10, 13, 17, 20, 27, 36; and particularly Article 35, the subscription to

them, and those some of the chief.——If indeed our articles were few and plain, consisting only of some of the most obvious and necessary truths, and every young scholar to be admitted, were thorowly instructed and examined in each, before subscription; and if our preparatory schools (public and private) were what they ought to be, seminaries of a truly religious education, where our young people were trained up to virtue and piety, and taught as much Christian as Heathen knowledge; if this were the case, the difficulty perhaps would not be so great, nor the demand of subscription so unreasonable, as now in many instances it seems to be. But since there is usually a very great defect in school-education, and very few of our youths comparatively are so happy as to be early and thorowly instructed as they ought, in the great principles of religion; we cannot but lament their being obliged to subscribe such articles of it, at their coming to the University, as they never have been taught to understand, whilst they were in those schools, which undertook to prepare them for it.

Upon the whole, we really and seriously judge, that as the imposition, wheresoever, or by whomsoever it may be insisted upon in this instance, can serve no manner of useful purpose; so is it in many cases (or we are exceedingly mistaken) not a little hurtful and prejudicial.——Wherein, how far, and how evidently such an imposition is both useless and detrimental, may better become those learned socie-

which is reckoned a virtual subscription to our two tomes of *Homilies*. Dr. Bennet, (in his directions for studying, &c. p. 24.) thinks, that persons designing for Orders ought to go through all the Homilies, before they are ordained; because, (says he) they are then to *subscribe* them. If so, ought not persons designing to be *matriculated* to go through them, because they also are then to subscribe them?

ties to examine, than us to explain. We pay the greatest regard to their erudition and judgment; but wish them to consider the case of numbers, that accede to them, without having a sufficient share of either to qualify them for subscribing such deep points, as some of our articles contain. In proportion as our Universities are improving in both these good qualities, they will, we doubt not, wisely and tenderly consider about this matter, and lay aside a practice, which they find no way serviceable to the advancement of religion or learning, and would find extremely difficult to defend and justify, in the manner, that would be expected from such renowned bodies.

2. With regard to *forms of subscription*, previous to admission into the ministry, we think it may be properly queried, whether those now enjoined be in all respects the most commodious, and the most likely to attain the ends proposed by enjoining them? —It hath been thought by many, not to be altogether so reasonable, nor indeed so expedient, to require an implicit subscription to so great a variety of particulars, as are comprehended in our Common-prayer, Homilies, Articles, Ordinal, &c. any one of which singly might perhaps afford matter sufficient to exercise the judgment, and try the conscience of a sincere inquirer (a).

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(a) The Rev. Dr. Bennet, speaking of the 35th article says, 'It is unreasonable to extend a single proposition in that article to an approbation of every proposition, that may be found in a whole *Folio*-book of merely human-composition; and in which, upon that account, it would be a miracle, if nothing were either really amiss, or what an honest man might with a very good conscience dissent from.' We only ask, whether this declaration of the Doctor's may not be applied with equal pertinence to the case of subscribing to the *Common-Prayer*, and the other books abovementioned? He says, indeed, that 'he, who

Such Subscription, among other things, hath kept out many, even members of our own Church, that had both a desire and ability to do it eminent service, and might have shone with peculiar lustre in its sacred ministry. Nor are any kept out of the ministry by such subscription, but men of conscience. For against those, who have none, no bar of this kind can be effectual.

Some of the wisest and most eminent Divines of our communion have declared their opinion freely, that a subscription expressed in more general terms, might answer the purpose full as well, or perhaps much better, than that over-precise and coercive one (as it is thought to be) which we now injoin. Of this mind was the most learned Bishop *Stillington* (a), and

‘ subscribes this article (still meaning the 35th) is not supposed thereby to declare his approbation of every particular which is found in the Homilies.’ If this be so, are we supposed by our Subscription to declare our approbation of every particular, which is to be found in the *Common-prayer*, &c? We leave this to those, who can better judge of these matters than we can, or would pretend to do; only observing, that Lord Chief Justice *Coke* affirms, ‘ that the Subscription required in the 13th year of Queen *Elizabeth*, [viz. 1571] was to the thirty-nine Articles, ‘ without indulgence or exclusion.’ *Instit.* part 4. ch. 74, p. 323, 324. It really seems by these different declarations, that there is something or other pretty difficult to account for in the subscriptions required; and that Dr. *Bennet* was a little pinched in his endeavors to clear them of difficulty. Nor doth he seem to have been sufficiently aware, how far some of his concessions might affect the whole cause. — It is to be wished therefore, that for the future, subscriptions might be so ordered, as to leave no room for disputes, nor give any occasion for inventing subterfuges. For the business of subscription is serious and important, and by no means to be trifled with.

(a) See his works, vol. II. p. 468, where (in his preface to the unreasonableness of separation) he hath put some rational and modest queries to the Church, relating to our present subscription to the book of *Common-prayer*; whereby he plainly enough intimates

and other excellent men of the last century. And we are told that several of our present Governors, eminent for candor and largeness of soul, have declared themselves of the same judgment.

2. Altho' we have a great esteem for our *Book of Homilies*, on account of those excellent persons, who were the compilers of it, and do willingly acknowledge, that it 'doth contain a godly and wholesome doctrine, necessary for those times,' in which it was compiled; yet we may reasonably be allowed to ask, whether that book is, either for matter or language, so calculated for the exigence of the times *we live in*, as that another may not be drawn up by pious and learned men, which shall be better suited to our present occasions? A book, wherein the fundamental articles of faith, and rules

intimates it to be his own judgment, that a method less exceptionable, and every way sufficient for the purpose, might easily be devised, and safely yielded to by the Governors. His queries on this and the like heads are intended to be set forth in the *Appendix*.—As to what follows, we leave every one to form his own judgment. To *us* it seems to contain sufficient concessions to our purpose. Bishop *Sanderson*, it seems, was applied to by some Divines, who desired his judgment about the following declaration, or form of subscription, which they said they could readily agree to, *viz.* 'We are perswaded, that the constant doctrine of the Church of *England* is so pure and orthodox, that whosoever believes it, and lives according to it, shall be saved; and that there is no error in it, which may necessitate any man to disturb the peace, or renounce the communion of it.' When the Bishop had read and considered this declaration, his answer was, 'I never subscribed to any other sense myself.' *Des Maizeaux's* life of *Chillingworth*, p. 168. And *Chillingworth's* own sense about subscription, and the intent thereof, is expressed in these words; 'I do verily believe the Church of *England* a true member of the Church [*catholic*]; that she wants nothing necessary to salvation, and holds nothing repugnant to it. And I thought (adds he) that to think so, had sufficiently qualified me for a subscription.' *Life*, p. 88.—The declarations of several other great men might be added, but these few specimens may be sufficient here.

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of practice, shall be so clearly, succinctly, and solidly laid down, as to make a complete, tho' compendious system of divine and moral truths, adapted to the meanest capacities, and proper to be in every one's hands.

If our present book of homilies be really necessary for the instruction of our people, why is it not read to them? If it is not necessary, why is it continued and enjoined to be read (ß)?—We know, that a sermon of private composition is supposed to render the reading of it needless. But with humble submission, we are still of opinion, that a book of homilies, drawn up by authority, and containing in it the substance of revealed religion, according to what was above observed, might even still be of great benefit to our congregations, and indeed in many cases needful; especially in those churches, where there is neither catechising nor preaching in afternoons, on Sundays, and where, for that and the like reasons, the evening service is generally but too much neglected, if not, by many, despised.

3. Since we have here occasionally mentioned *Catechising*, we must not pass it over without one remark; which is, that since this great duty is very wisely and very strictly enjoined, by our Church, upon every Clergyman, that undertakes the care of a parish, and is withal (more especially at this time) of absolute necessity to be performed with unwearied assiduity, according to the rules prescribed; it doth,

(ß) It will not perhaps be difficult to guess, why our homilies are not now read in our churches, when they shall be thorowly examined by competent judges. We may possibly exhibit some particulars in the *Appendix*, which may give occasion to inquire, whether it be *proper* to read them; or, if they must be read, whether it may not be proper, that they should be revised first, and that with some care and pains.

we think, highly concern those great and good men, who preside over our ecclesiastical establishment, to make it one principal part of their care, that this necessary duty be conscientiously fulfilled in all the churches of their respective dioceses.—If we are herein mistaken, we shall very readily acknowledge our mistake, and retract our error, as soon as we shall find, either that the duty of catechising is no longer enjoined by the Church of *England*; or, that being enjoined, it is accordingly discharged therein (γ).

4. Are

(γ) A worthy Clergyman in the country having obliged us with the following observations, which seem to deserve regard, we know not where to insert them better than in this place.

‘ Preaching (says he) upon particular texts of Scripture, sometimes upon one, sometimes upon another, and that at the choice and discretion of the Preachers, may undoubtedly have its use, and be attended with some good. But I am much mistaken in my judgment, and that founded upon experience and attentive observation, if there be not a still more useful way, at least for instructing common Christians, who make up the bulk of most of our congregations.

‘ Plain, simple, and familiar *Catechising* (performed after the most natural and easy manner, so as to be intelligible to the meanest capacity, and affecting to all) would, in my humble opinion, be far more effectual towards promoting Christian knowledge and practice, and warming the heart with devotion, than set and elaborate discourses from the pulpit. Not that I would have such discourses wholly disused; but used only upon some great and extraordinary occasions, and that chiefly by Bishops, and men of prime rank in the Church; and sometimes, on such occasions, by inferior Clergymen also; as more particularly, on days of solemn Fasts, public Thanksgivings, and the like. At all other times, on all Sundays, and all Festivals of the Church, it would seem much better, and would, in all probability, be found more serviceable for the advancement of religion, if such catechising, as I have proposed, was constantly practised; proceeding regularly from one catechetical head to another, till we arrived to the conclusion of the catechism; and then beginning anew, and going thro’ the same easy and delightful task from year to year.

‘ This might be done (and even now it ought to be so) on all Sundays at least in the afternoon; spending about half an hour
‘ in

4. Are all our present *Canons* the best calculated with regard to the present state of the Church?—Many seem to be grown obsolete by disuse; and many more would be esteemed a burthen upon the subjects of the realm, if they were as rigorously executed, as they seem to have been at first intended (δ). And from such execution would arise many unchristian heats and animosities, murmurings, and heart-burnings, and perhaps also tumults and insurrections, as in the last century.—And yet,

5. Are

‘ in such exercise. And in the morning a plain *Homily* might be read, proceeding, according to appointed order, upon matters of doctrine, and matters of practice. The whole of which might be comprized in fifty-two Orations, besides those appointed for the Festivals, &c. On which, if there were new and proper homilies appointed, our churches, I have reason to hope, would be more frequented at such solemn seasons. There is a passage, I remember, in Bishop *Sanderson's* life by *Isaac Walton*, which shews I am not singular in my judgment about these points; and if you please to look into that narrative, you will see what were the sentiments of that good Bishop, in relation to such things; and that he thought we wanted some better provisions than we have, to promote the great end of Christian knowledge and practice, and restore peace to the Church.’

To this learned Gentleman's observations, we beg leave to add what now occurs to our thoughts, and exactly agrees with what he hath remarked. These are the remarkable words of the pious Bishop *Hall*, in his *Epist. Dedic.* before his book intitled, *The olde Religion*. ‘ In truth, the most useful of all preaching is catechetical.—For my part, I have spent the greater halfe of my life in this station of our holy service: I thank God, not unpainfully, nor unprofitably: But there is no one thing, whereof I repent so much, as not to have bestowed more houres in this exercise of Catechisme. In regard whereof, I could quarrel my very Sermons, and wish, that a great part of them had been exchanged for this preaching-conference, &c.’ ‘ O for the ancient and primitive ordinance of *catechising* (says Dr. *Fuller*;) every *Youth* can preach; but he must be a *Man* indeed, who can profitably *catechise*.’ *Mixt Contempl.* Sect. 49.

(δ) Those severe injunctions about excommunicating men *ipso facto*, so often repeted, and so strongly insisted upon, in this extraordinary

5. Are not our *Church-wardens* still required to present upon oath, according to the letter of these canons (ε)?—An *oath*, by the way, seems to be a sacred thing; tho' canons, generally speaking, are of an inferior nature, and of less importance to the public, than an oath. By reason of the multiplicity of oaths, taken too inconsiderately, and upon less momentous occasions, our Land mourns; nor does the Church of our Land seem to be the better for such oaths, tho' taken, or enjoined to be taken, in order to its support and preservation.

It may perhaps, after all, become the wisdom of the Church, and at last be found to be her interest, to lessen the number of oaths; especially within her-

traordinary system of laws, seem, to men of charitable and candid sentiments, to be much too harsh, and too unlike the spirit of the Gospel of peace. The excellent person, who obliged us with the following observation in a letter, will not, we presume, be offended at our inserting it here, without consulting him. *The anathema's in our canons, says he, are so inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, that it is quite necessary to part with them, as soon as may be. They are the language of the apocalyptic—most certainly, not of the disciples of the meek and lowly Saviour of the world.* And yet, is not the book, which contains this language, ordered to be read so many times a year (once, at least, if not oftner) in all our churches?

(ε) Since the judgment of the present Lord Chancellor, when Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, (*Mich. 1736, Middleton v. Crofts*) it is sometimes questioned, whether any Church-wardens are obliged, or can legally be compelled, to take the oath, or oaths, enjoined by the canons of 1603, Tit. vi. and ix. And the reason given is, because, according to the decree aforesaid, those canons do not bind the *Laity*. We leave the matter as we find it; only wishing, that, by some good means or other, the thing could be set upon a better footing than the present; and that so many ignorant or unthinking people throughout the kingdom were not put under such engagements, as must almost unavoidably involve them in a guilt, which we are not willing to name, and which no honest and good man can think of without horror.

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self, and in her own particular concerns.—But these things are by us submitted to the better judgment of our Governors. For we still desire our sentiments should be meetly subordinate to theirs, in every thing just and rational, and tending to the public welfare.

S E C T. XI.

Queries and Observations relating to certain Grievances generally complained of in the Church.

WE would touch very tenderly upon things of this nature, and could wish there was no occasion to mention them at all. For it can give no pleasure to us to say any thing, that may be like to give offence to any, even the meanest person in the Church ; much less to those, who may have any authority in it. We must therefore desire persons of every degree, in this Christian society, to interpret candidly the following queries and observations.

I. With respect to our *ecclesiastical Courts*, we would beg leave to ask, whether these courts, in their present form, answer the original design and institution thereof ? Are they, as at present managed, of absolute necessity either to the being, or even to the well-being of our Church ? Are they an essential part of it ? And do they derive real honor, or do real service to it as a Christian community ? Or would it be a real loss and detriment to our Church as Christian, to be either without such courts, or to have them at least reformed and better regulated ? Or, lastly, (if that shall be judged necessary) to have

have some other consistories established in their room, which shall be found to be more agreeable to the laws of the Gospel, and not disagreeable to the laws of the realm?

2. We must speak a word or two about our want *discipline*; a want, that is greatly, universally, and not without reason complained of: And it is much to be lamented, that such repeted and just complaints are not heard, nor any endeavors used to restore the discipline, that is wanted. Indeed, our *commination office* solemnly wishes for, and our ecclesiastical courts make a solemn shew of administering, such discipline: Yet we believe no serious, sensible, disinterested person, who reads the New Testament only, and much more one, who is sufficiently conversant in the first Christian writers next after the Apostles, can seriously think, that the discipline, which is commonly exercised, is the true Christian discipline, such as our Lord himself hath ordained, and such as ought to be exercised in his Church. If any man thinks it *is*, let him freely and honestly speak his mind, and give the best proofs he can of what he asserts.

The discipline, which our blessed Lord appointed, to keep his Church pure from corruption and scandal, is most plain, and most easy to be understood by any man of common capacity, and common ingenuity. And the discipline he prescribes is so just, and withal so merciful, that it would exceed the wit of man to contrive any thing more so. Besides, it is evidently as much an ordinance of Christ, as his holy supper or baptism. This every man must be convinced of, who but barely looks into the xviiith

Chapter

Chapter of St. *Matthew* (ζ), where our Lord hath settled this institution, and laid down the rules of it.

This institution is also not only essential, but even absolutely necessary for the Church, to keep it in any degree of purity and decency, as the divine Founder of it intended. Let only our sad experience of the want of it, testify this. We need appeal to no other evidence. This alone is but too glaring and strong.—Is it not therefore time, and more than time, to restore discipline, if it be possible to restore it? And will our Church ever be, what she professes, and what she ought to be, *viz.* a truly primitive, a truly apostolical, a truly (η) Christian Church, without it?

Were we to add more upon this head, we should but give the more offence, as many have done before us; for which reason we deliberately stop in time, having said enough for serious men to consider. Only let it be observed, that the discipline, which we desire may be restored, is no other than the discipline, which Jesus Christ and his Apostles have settled; a discipline of the gentlest and most merciful nature, relating to mens souls and bodies; a discipline, which every wise man will

(ζ) Compare also 1 *Cor.* v. and *Theff.* iii. 6, 14. and see an admirable discourse upon the subject of Christian discipline, in Mr. *Ostervald's causes of the corruption of Christians*, Part II. Chap. 2.

(η) *It is the glory of our English Church, and what she often boasts of, that she is the nearest of any now in the Christian world, to the primitive model. It is not, I presume, denied, that she might be nearer still; and if her glory be great for being so near, it would certainly be greater, if she were yet nearer.* Dr. *Marshall's* preface to his translation of St. *Cypr.* speaking of the want of discipline in the Church of England.

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1710,

allow to be just ; and which every man, who understands the nature of society in general, will own to be necessary ; a discipline, which inflicts no fines, obliges to no suit, requires no cost, deprives of no civil liberty, nor is attended with any corporal punishment. All the disadvantage, with regard to the present world, is, that it dismisses an unworthy member from the Christian community (8). And

(8) " The Church of Christ, as a society separate from the State, hath (what all societies must have) proper bands of union ; upon a breach of which, she may declare any person breaking them, as no longer in her *fellowship*.—Were the civil Magistrate in this case *neuter*, and did he no otherwise interpose, than by his *protection* of the Church in her regular exercise of this authority ; no grievance, I should think, could be here complained of.—And the supposed *Neutrality* of the Magistrate, as to *civil penalties*, would then leave the persons excluded from this society, easy, and secure from such penalties." Dr. *Marshall's* Letter to Dr. *Rogers*, annexed to *Rogers's Vindicat.* p. 310, 311. This declaration of Dr. *Marshall's* (wherein he says he agrees with his friend Dr. *Rogers*) carries in it a great and momentous truth, and that of greater consequence to the real interest of Christianity, than the bulk of mankind seems to be aware. To which we shall only add, for the present, those just remarks of the learned Mr. *John Needham*, in his Visitation-sermon before the Clergy at *Warnford*, 1710. " We no where find our blessed Savior to have given any other authority to his Church, for punishing offenders, or for reclaiming the erroneous, but what is expressed by exhortation, reproof, or exclusion from the communion and privileges of the faithful. Which is a demonstration to me, that no other were intended by Him, or are lawful to us. He would have religion, which is a reasonable service, served only in humane and reasonable ways, such as at once may make the world believe and love his institutions. And if, in some extraordinary cases, the Apostles, endowed with extraordinary powers, thought fit to inflict extraordinary punishments on mens bodies, I think this no sufficient warrant and authority to us, till the same powers and emergencies return again into the Church." Our Reformers were of the same judgment, as appears by many instances in history, and in their writings : See particularly the *Institution of a Christian Man*, tit. *The sacrament of orders*, p. 46, a. See also Bishop *Stillingfleet's* discourse concerning the power of excommunication in a Christian Church ; and his *Life*, 8vo. 1710, p. 15, 16. referring to that discourse.

surely all unworthy and pernicious members ought to be dismissed from that, as much as from any community relating to the civil State.—Happy would it be, if the nature and design of the Gospel, and of a true Christian Church, was once fully understood, and all the clouds removed, which intercept the truth from mens eyes. The aversion men have to discipline, would soon cease, and all men of reason and sober morals would readily come into it. Those, who did not, might declare they were no Christians, and then they should have no further trouble from any laws of Christianity. For as this religion forces no one to be a professor of it, so neither doth it oblige any one to its duties, who doth not voluntarily undertake them. This is all we say; and we leave it to any man to make out the contrary, when he pleases, or can, consistently with the Gospel, which we have now in our hands. Nevertheless, until the discipline of that Gospel is restored, we patiently submit to that, which the Law now enjoins.

We have now gone thro' the several articles we proposed to speak to, in the course of these inquiries. Men of discernment will readily see, and men of ingenuity freely acknowledge, that there are divers *other* articles, which might very well have deserved our animadversions. But we chuse not to meddle with them at present, being points either of a more intricate nature, or else more apt to give offence, if handled with freedom, than any perhaps we have yet touched upon.

Such, for instance, are the grand articles of *Plurality* and *Non-residence*; which nevertheless cannot be handled with more freedom, or greater force, than

than hath been done by the unparallel'd author of a late treatise upon the subject (1).

If he hath gained his point, we need not say any thing. If he hath not, we should in vain hope to be more successful by any thing we could say. And yet his book will remain a standing testimony against all unnecessary tolerations of this kind, 'till it can be fairly answered. Which, it is generally thought, is never to be expected.

We might also mention (what is no less frequently complained of, as *an unspeakable mischief to reli-*

(1) *Pluralities indenfensibile.*—The complaints on this head are of much longer standing than this book. All ages, since the first introduction of this grievance into the Church, have exclaimed against it; and a protestant Church may very well be excused for her making remonstrances upon the subject, since she doth but continue those, that have so long and so often been made before, even by a popish one. *Les pluralités ont esté la grande cause de l'absence des tiels curats, &c.* This being the general complaint, consultation was accordingly held, and motion publicly made, by the King (*Hen. IV.*) with the advice and consent of his Parliament, as the records inform us, *de revoke & repeller toutes le pluralités généralement, & que d'es ore en avant nulle pluralité soit graunte a aucun en temps a venir.* And we may see what was then thought (tho' the same cannot be thought now) concerning the power and concern of the Convocation, in regard to the redress of such grievances; *Ceste matière appartient a sainte Eglise, & quant a la residence, remede ent fust purveu en la darraîn Convocation.* And again, (speaking of the same grievance) *Il appartient aux offices des Evêques;—facent les Ordinaires leur office & devoirs.* (*Rot. Parl. 17 R. H. & 7, & 11 H. IV.*) But here is the misfortune: What Bishops, or other Ordinaries, can now execute their office in this point, if they would, or at least in the manner they would? However, their Lordships have publicly and frequently shewn, by their discreet charges to their Clergy, how much they desire, that this abuse may be rectified; tho' few of them, we suppose, are so successful in such applications, as Bishop *Burnet* was in the case of the conscientious Mr. *Keisey*.

gion, and a great scandal and reproach upon the Church (x) the case of *simoniacal contracts*. Were our *canon* but altered, and the embargo upon conscience taken off, the case, in some instances, might appear less criminal, and the sense of our common Lawyers, upon this head, might very well pass for a just one. But till something of this kind is done, the canon retains its sense and its force ; and the declaration it requires, will admit of no equivocation, or double meaning. However, we shall say no more : Let impartial judges consider.

As to the case of *curacies* ; the education of young persons for the ministry ; the unhappy provision made for many parishes—which frequently occasions separation ; the insufficient provision made for many ministers, which frequently occasions contempt ; the very incommodious settlement of that provision, in many places, which unavoidably engages men, sometimes in contention, and almost always in vexation, and things foreign to their ministry, and obstructive of its end ;—at the thought of such grievances, we can only lament and mourn, saying, *Lord how long?* not being willing to expose, nor able to redress, what it may well become the wisdom of a *British* Senate to consider. If these and the like things are not lookt to in time, and a proper remedy sought, and found, and effectually applied ; it is easy to foresee, and we dare venture (tho' with the utmost concern) to foretel, the ruin of religion in the Church of *England*. But

*Dī talem avertite casum,
Et placidi servate pios !*

(x) *Grey's System*, tit. 34. p. 292.

S E C T. XII.

The Application ; relating to a Review in general, as before proposed ; humbly pressing it upon farther motives, and fairly reconsidering the supposed difficulties, &c.

WE have hitherto, with the utmost deference, been representing to our national Synod, what we judge may deserve their consideration, relating to our public service, and the several parts of it ; with some other particulars, that occurred, as deserving like consideration. We may now, we hope, be indulged the liberty to offer our sentiments concerning the expediency and feasibility of making the alterations proposed ; having principally in view those we have suggested in relation to our Liturgy.

We acknowledge, with all the submission becoming us, that it is not for inferiors to prescribe in such cases : Nor do we in any wise presume to do this. But it may be allowed inferiors to query, remind, and request ; which is all we have here taken upon us to do. Nor did we ever intend to go further, in any part of our address.

It ought not to be denied (since experience hath shewn) that some alterations are dangerous. But we presume nevertheless to think (since experience hath no less shewn) that all alterations are not so ; as we shall endeavor to make evident by degrees, from plain facts. And if it be true, that nothing human can be perfect, it is, we think, as true, that every thing human ought to be rendered as perfect as it is well capable of being ; or at least, that no

good endeavors should be wanting, that can be used to this purpose, in the way of peace and prudence.

If it be true again, that many are easy and well satisfied, and that it is impossible to give satisfaction to all, even under the best establishments ; yet, may it not be equally true, that if some things be visibly wrong, and owned to be so by all the more intelligent and judicious members of an establishment, those things ought to be considered of, and proper methods taken to set them right ?

And if, for want of taking such measures, it be but too evident, that the honor of religion suffers from time to time, and the interest of the Church is observed to be gradually upon the decline ; will not this, by observing and disinterested men, be esteemed a culpable neglect in some or other concerned ; and a call more immediately directed to the ruling powers, to look after such things, and prevent further inconveniencies ?

For our own part, we humbly think, with many, who are far wiser and more discerning than ourselves, that these things deserve attention, and that at this time, tho' they have indeed deserved it long before ; and a more timely attention might probably have prevented the spread of some evils, which have been long complained of, and yet long increasing in the Church.

But if it be not a proper time *now* to attend, can we reasonably suppose it will be more so *hereafter*, when the evils complained of may be multiplied, and possibly our power of remedying them lessened ? For who can tell what times may come, or what changes in those times may take place, which may be found far more disagreeable in the event, than those

those harmless and easy ones, which we now, with so much seriousness and moderation, desire, in order to prevent them? For if the still small voice of the pious sons of the Church of *England* shall not be attended to, when they are supplicating and intreating with the greatest modesty and deference, and with the greatest love and regard for that Church; may it not prove somewhat of the latest to attend, when her adversaries are rejoicing over her weakness, or triumphing over her ruins?

Ut teipsum serves, non expergisceris?—

Finally, if some humble and pious, sedate and judicious men, whether Clergy or Laity in the Church, make no open declaration of their sentiments concerning several things they observe, but cannot approve of, in her constitution; we may well presume it is not because they have no desire they should be amended, or would not concur in endeavoring it, if they had proper power; but because they are meek and diffident, respectful towards the public government, and studious of the public peace: Which yet, we are well persuaded, cannot suffer from any modest and humble application, made at a proper time, to those, who are in authority, and whose will may be equal to that authority.

If then the present application be of this becoming strain, as we trust it is, tho' it be perhaps the first, that hath been made to our Governors in this (λ) private manner, in this serious spirit, and on these particular subjects; we humbly hope, as we earnestly wish, that by a just and timely regard to

(λ) It will be remembred here, and in other like places, that the first copy of this address was sent to the Convocation in MS. as was intimated in the preface.

our application, all future ones, of this, or of any other kind, relating to these subjects, will be rendred needless.

Honored Prelates and Presbyters of the Church of *England*!

Altho' none, perhaps, besides ourselves, have undertaken this no very eligible office of applying to you, with respect to the several generals or particulars, that have been laid before you; yet it cannot be supposed, but the things we have pointed out, must be obvious to every observing and attentive man; and that every serious and good man wishes every offence removed, every impropriety amended, and every grievance redressed; especially in concerns of so weighty, and so sacred a nature.

It is true the apprehension of difficulties, and perhaps of some danger, may deter even well-wishers, from either attempting any alterations, or proposing that any should be made.—But must these offensive peculiarities therefore always remain in the Church of God, without any amendment, or any overtures made towards it? Far be so disparaging an imputation from a Christian and protestant Church; so famous abroad, and so much esteemed at home, as ours is; and the praise of whose Governors, for their wisdom, moderation, and learning, is so deservedly celebrated throughout all the Churches.

Besides, have not alterations and improvements been several times made since the reformation, and no harm ensued? And if they have been made with safety in former times, may they not be so still? Or is our Church already so perfect, as that it neither needs, nor will admit of any alterations? We cannot say this, and our Governors, we are persuaded,

suaded, will not say it. Our Governors have, or (as we suppose) may have, the same power with their predecessors. The Church may still be repaired and improved. And it very audibly calls for improvement and repair. Let her request, we beg, be granted. And if no detriment succeeded upon former alterations, why should it be so much dreaded from later ones? We are still men; we are still Christians; and, let us add, to our joy, that notwithstanding the late attack made upon our constitution and government, we are still protestants. Let us continue so, and shew ourselves real protestants, Christians, and men. Nor let apprehensions of danger deter us, if they did not our forefathers, in cases like ours. They attempted, they succeeded, and the Nation acquiesced; and therefore acquiesced, because what was done, was done by lawful authority, and upon just occasions. And as the Nation, taken in the general, did thus readily acquiesce, each time that alterations and improvements were made; so did the supreme Court of the Nation, more than once, thankfully recognize the good service done by such improvements and alterations.

And as to the misgiving apprehensions, which some good men, whom we greatly honor, may entertain; we have just reason to believe, as well as hope, they will upon trial, be found to be more the effect of a well-meant caution, than of an unerring foresight. *Arise, and be doing, and the Lord be with you*, may be as proper an incitement now to the repairing, as it was at first to the building of the house of God. And that counsel seems to be founded upon long and successful experience,

*Incipe; dimidium facti est cœpisse; supersit
Dimidium: ————— rursus hoc
Incipe, & efficies.*

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If there be first a willing mind, and, consequent to that, an hearty engagment, in a design so just, so honorable to religion, and so subservient to its interest; we hope we need not question, but that wise and good God, whose religion it is, will second so good an undertaking with his assistance, and, by degrees, crown this work and labor of love to his Church, with the desired success. Be strong, therefore, and of good courage; fear not, nor let your hearts fail you, in so worthy an enterprize: Your God will be with you, when you are with him; and are doing what, upon the most rational principles, and most deliberate consideration, shall appear to you to be most agreeable to his will, and best to answer the design of his revelation. Which if neglected, or suffered to continue in that contempt it is in at present, for want of reforming those things, which are so disagreeable to its principles, and so destructive of its progress; let it be considered what God may, and what we provoke him to do, by continuing in such neglect. Is there yet time left us for considering and reforming? Let us not delay, for fear a still greater evil should come upon us, than this very want of reformation, upon the very account of delaying it; and, that too sensible a demonstration should some time or other be given, either to us or our posterity, that we have delayed too long. Which may God in mercy prevent, by inspiring the Governors of his Church with that resolution and zeal, which may be a means to prevent it! We have long and deeply considered about what we say, and therefore speak; speaking with a rational assurance, answerable to the goodness of our intent; and with a respectful deference, answerable to the eminence of your characters.

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May it please our very worthy Governors to permit us further to observe; that divers of us, who address them, being persons not a little conversant in the world, and having frequent opportunities of discerning the sentiments of mankind, relating to affairs of religion, do find reasons on the one hand, almost to despair of ever seeing what we desire, accomplished; and on the other, some slender encouragement to hope, that it may and will be done, on such a reasonable and just application, as we are now making.

Presuming then on a liberty, which we have no reason to suppose will be denied us, we will with an humble freedom exhibit the sentiments on both sides.

(1.) Some, even among ourselves, would persuade us, from what they see, and hear, and judge, that it is in vain to apply; or, if we do, to expect any success; telling us, that having, at times, dropt some distant intimations to some leading men among the Laity, (who are supposed to be no ill-wishers to our Zion) concerning the propriety of applying to the Governors of the Church, they delivered it as their judgment, that this would be to begin at the wrong end;—that if ever men desired to succeed in that point, there was a much shorter and more effectual way;—with other observations to that purpose, which we judge it not prudent to repeat.

Notwithstanding which suggestions, we have resolved, and do in duty begin here; where we hope
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we shall also successfully end (μ). And we do the more hope and desire it, as we would gladly have it in our power, to confront and invalidate that unlucky, but very common remark, 'That our reformation would neither have been set on foot, nor carried on, if it had been left to Churchmen alone.' If it be but to remove this one hard imputation, fastened upon so sacred an order of men to their discredit, we trust, nay, we beg, we lovingly, we respectfully, we earnestly beg and intreat, that something may be done, which may be truly honorable; honorable to our religion, to our Church, to our Clergy, to our Country; and pleasing to all, who are friends to each.

(2.) Others, whom some of us have the honor very intimately to converse with upon the subject of these papers, and to whom several of them have been communicated, give us encouragement to hope for success, from the moderation and candor so observable at this time in some of the leading men among our Church-governors: Who having the welfare of the Church, and the advancement of Christianity, unquestionably at heart, will, they believe, readily receive, and impartially consider what-

(μ) We have lately had some reasons to think, that our application will not stand single; and that there is a plan laid out for the further prosecution of it by abler hands, and perhaps intended to be addressed to the secular Powers only. The intimations we have hitherto had, being imperfect, we leave them so, and leave it to the progress of time to discover upon what grounds they stand. In the mean time, it may be proper to consider what a learned and wise man hath observed, that *it is to be wisht, that we ourselves could be persuaded to examine our own state* [with regard to our want of further reformation] *before others are obliged to do it for us: that we were disposed to help forward, rather than check the progress of every serious inquiry; and stop any farther improvements in things, which deserve and want them most, rather than withstand a general reformation in religion, &c.*

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ever shall be laid before them, that shall appear to be properly calculated to promote both ; and particularly, that most of those, whom these Gentlemen have conversed with, seem very well disposed, whenever they shall be permitted, to enter upon a fair and public examination of whatever articles shall be proposed to them, as requiring a review ; adding, that besides some other obstructions, which need not be named, it has in some measure been owing to a multiplicity of other business, and their not having been applied to upon the subject of this, that they have not hitherto entred upon it, nor desired leave of the Government to do so. And it is the opinion of these reporters, that those worthy and good men would be so far from being offended, that they would take it kindly to be applied to, in a rational, discreet, and decent manner, upon affairs of this importance ; since they cannot so prudently and inoffensively take such matters into consideration, when they do it of themselves, as when they undertake it at the instance and request of the Clergy ;—with other things to this purpose, which seem no way unlikely.

And as to the danger and difficulty suggested, the Gentlemen we have mentioned are pleased to tell us, that it is, upon just reasons, their opinion, that there will be no difficulty or danger at all, (none at least to be set in competition with the present inconveniences,) if such prudential measures, as are sufficiently obvious, shall be taken, with just resolution, and becoming gentleness.

As for instance ; they think there needs no more to be done, than that the national Synod should (v),

(v) The known objection against the ecclesiastical Committee in 1689, would hereby be obviated. Vid. *Heylin's* proposal, in his life by *Vernon*, p. 250.

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by a special Committee properly authorised, draw up such emendations, as they shall see necessary: Which being agreed upon, and legally confirmed, should be sent in one or more sheets, as forms of prayer for public occasions usually are, to all Churches and Chapels in the kingdom; the Ministers of each being left to their liberty, either to use them or not, according to their discretion. No inconveniences, they are persuaded, could ensue from such a conduct, or some other like it; or, if any should, so as to overbalance the present, the same powers, that authorised the emendations, can, when they please, recall them.

If it should here be supposed, that the leaving such emendations to the *discretion* of Ministers may be like to be attended with some inconvenience; we must beg leave to offer an observation or two, which may, in some measure, remove the ground of the supposition.

Now considering things with that fairness and impartiality, with which they ought to be considered, we must freely own, we can see no reason to apprehend such inconvenience, as is imagined. We will try, if we can express our thoughts upon this head, to the satisfaction of every honest and impartial mind: And if we should even fail in our attempt, still we are sure we can do no harm; since we shall but leave things as we find them, and every one is left to judge, whether we offer any thing like reason.

1. In the first place we would observe, that we propose nothing *new*; nothing but what hath, in some sort or degree, been proposed and done before; and that without inconvenience, so far as we can find. We will give a few instances, such as occur

cur to our thoughts on the sudden. And a few, if they are proper, will be sufficient.

At the beginning of our reformation, it was judged adviseable to leave men to their liberty, as to making, or not making *auricular confession* to the Priest (ξ). And tho' the practice was afterwards gradually dropt, yet was it never abrogated by any formal act of the Church. Nay, Mr. *L'Estrange* assures us, that 'the Church doth still approve of, tho' she doth not command, auricular confession (ο). And we are told, that Bishop *Andrews*, when Residentiary of St. Paul's, thought it part of his office, and accordingly shewed his readiness to receive such confessions, in case any were offered to be made to him (π).

Much room was left for the exercise of discretion, with respect to several other things. *Extreme unction* was left at liberty; being, as Dr. *Heylin* observes, rather permitted, than required by the Church (ρ). And so were the ceremonies mentioned in the following rubric; *As touching kneeling, crossing, holding up of hands, knocking upon the breast, and other gestures, they may be used, or left, as every man's devotion serveth, without blame.* The use of the veil was also left indifferent; the Church neither enjoining nor forbidding such habit at the thanksgiving of women. Nor does it either forbid or injoin it to this very day (ς); leaving it still indifferent, as the first Compilers did, and as foreign Churches do, and have done many things of this kind, ever since the

(ξ) See the Communion-office, in Bishop *Sparrow's* collections.

(ο) Alliance, ch. 10. p. 298.

(π) See his life, by *Isaacson*.

(ρ) Hist. of Presb. p. 13.

(ς) See *L'Estrange's* alliance, ch. 11. p. 327.

reformation (τ). Our Church has also shewed indulgence in such matters more lately, as well as formerly. The Convocation in 1640 allowed of the rule of charity, in their canon relating to bowing, at entring into the Church (υ). And although one part of the Commissioners at the *Savoy*, 1661, did not succeed in their request, that the use of *sponsors in baptism*, the *ring in marriage*, &c. might be left indifferent; yet did their request seem reasonable enough to those of the opposite side, who were of the more moderate temper, and willing to make reasonable concessions, where they found the requests to be such.

If it shall be thought, that these instances of liberty, in point of *ceremonies*, do not sufficiently come up to the purpose; we shall only say, that if they do not fully reach it, we think they do not fall very much short of it; and fair judges will, perhaps, go further, and allow, that they intirely coincide with what we have in view. For they are all of them instances of indulgence granted by the Church, in cases, where the Church foresaw some might have scruples, tho' others might have none. For she was willing to shew her regard for both, and to make the one party easy, as well as the other: Which surely is great wisdom, because it is great moderation. And may our Church be ever famous for both!

(τ) They generally take their rule from *Luther's* conduct, who led them the way with great prudence and moderation, leaving room for choice in some things, even from his first attempts to reform the Church. For, among other regulations of this sort, thus he determined in particular, concerning candles and incense; *Nec candelas nec thurificationem prohibemus, sed nec exigimus: esto hoc liberum.* Formula missæ, *Witteberg*, 1523.

(υ) See can. 7. in *Sparrow's* collections, p. 27.

But

But in the present case, as well as in all others, we only desire a *just* liberty may be granted. We might reasonably beg this liberty, as many others have often done, even in some things, that are indifferent in their nature; but think we have more reason to apply for it in points, that are of consequence, and create real scruples. For surely, where matters wanting a review, are justly thought, and can well be proved of importance, to be rectified; and many inconveniencies ensue for want of their being set right; there, reason tells us, condescension ought to be shewn; and if the terms, as they are at present limited, are found to be too strict, they ought, with a generous freedom, to be enlarged; and proper liberty allowed for the future.

In the mean time we go on with our argument; in support of which, we think we can exhibit some points of *greater* moment than mere ceremonials; which yet were left at liberty, or however not insisted upon with that absolute and invariable exactness, with which divers of them have been since.

Our Reformers allowed even the *Litany*, the *Gloria in excelsis*, the *Nicene Creed*, the *Homily*, and the *exhortation to the communion*, to be omitted on some great and urgent occasions; referring the omissions in such cases to the *discretion of the Curate* (φ). We know, indeed, that this liberty hath been revoked since, and, perhaps, for some just causes; but must own we have not yet heard of any, and do still conceive, that some moderate liberties of this kind, on proper occasions, would do no harm; especially when the service, as we already mentioned, and as

(φ) 1st Book of *Edu.* 6. See in *L'Estrange*, c. 11. p. 313.

is generally owned, happens sometimes to be really much too long, and consequently less useful to the purposes of edification and piety.

It appears also, that the succeeding set of Reformers, under Queen *Elizabeth*, did, and the Church still doth, allow considerable liberty to the Ministers with regard to the choice of *homilies*; leaving it to them, *prudently to chuse out such homilies, as be most meet for the time, and for the more agreeable instruction of the people committed to their charge* (x).— And to their discretion likewise they recommended it, *to divide the homily, to be read part in the forenoon, and part in the afternoon, where the same may appear too long for one reading* (↓). Further still, with respect to the *Lessons* to be read; they did not tie them down too minutely to the observance of the prescribed rule, where there might be just causes for varying from it. For they allowed them the liberty to alter, where they should find, upon due consideration, that *some one or other chapter of the Old Testament, falling in order to be read upon the Sundays or Holy-days, were better to be changed with some other of the New Testament of more edification* (ω).— Nor are there wanting instances, where our Ministers are still left to their discretion, with regard to the limited choice of certain lessons; as the first lesson for evening-service on *January 30th*, and the first lesson for morning-service on the *29th of May*. And as to the reading of the *apocryphal lessons*, we find it insisted upon by Archbishop *Laud*, (tho' we do not know upon what authority so great a man

(x) *Admonition before the second tome of homilies.*

(↓) *Ibid.*

(ω) *Ibid.* And it may be observed, that some of the older editions of the Calendar (e. g. that of 1576.) in *Q. Elizabeth's Bible*, have no references to Lessons.

asserts it) that for the time of reading them, it is of no necessity ; but left by the Church to the discretion of the godly and discreet Minister (α).—We may further observe, in favor of discreet liberty and choice, that King *William*, in his royal proclamation, recommending the new version of the Psalms, by *Brady* and *Tate*, leaves every congregation at liberty to use that, or the old version, as they should like best. And we never heard of any disturbance or irregularity on account of this permission.—Lastly, and to produce no more instances, tho' more might be produced ; our very *Common prayer* itself, and the *rubrics* therein confirmed by act of Parliament, leave the Minister to his discretion, as to the choice of several *Prayers*, *Psalms*, and *Hymns* ; prefixing the words, *Or this*, (β) &c.

From these various particulars occutring on recollection, it appears, that our Church has always

(α) Objections against the Common-prayer answered, in Dr. *Nichols*, vol. II. part 2. p. 33. col. 1.

(β) An allowance or permission of this very sort, consisting only of *two words*, prefixt (suppose) to a new prayer or collect in some of our offices, where there appears to be any thing harsh in the old, would be a means to remove many just scruples, and prevent many considerable inconveniencies. But some may, perhaps, object, that greater inconveniencies would ensue, as *uniformity* would hereby be broken. To this objection we can only answer in the words of Dr. *Snape* ; whose authority, we suppose, may be allowed to be of some weight in the present case. " It happens (says he) pretty often in our Liturgy, that there are two *hymns*, or two *collects*, to the same effect ; and it is left to the discretion of the Minister, whether of the two he will read. But I never heard it urged as inconsistent with *uniformity*, that one of these was read in one of our churches, whilst the other was reading in another. And yet the same reason, by which that is justified, will justify the practice I am asserting, which is, that the matter is left *indifferent*, and in either case, the disjunctive particle *Or*, in the rubric, gives a discretionary latitude. You may say or sing, you may read this prayer or that." Vol. III. Sermon. 3. p. 106, 107.

been wisely kind and indulgent to her children, especially her Ministers, in allowing them a just liberty of choice on certain occasions, where it was thought necessary, or seemed proper, to make such allowance ; and always, as far as we can yet find, without any ill consequence, or real inconvenience. Why then should it be supposed, that the discretionary choice we are here proposing, and pleading for, should be productive of any worse consequence, than the instances we have mentioned ? For our own parts, we are satisfied there can be no just and solid objection in this case ; and we appeal to experience as well as reason ; to that of the present age, as well as of the past.

2. We now go on to some other observations, and come more directly to the point ; begging leave to speak our minds freely, and without offence, as follows.

Suppose many worthy Clergymen (and we here suppose nothing but what we know to be true, concerning some of the worthiest in the Kingdom,) have several very considerable and very just scruples relating to the *Baptismal* and *Burial Offices* ; to say nothing now of any others, that may be more or less exceptionable. Suppose next, that in order to give relief to such worthy men (which surely in all honor and equity ought to be given them) the authorised sheets, sent to every parish, shall contain in them two *new*, but short offices, one for *Baptism*, the other for *Burial* ;—unless you should perhaps think that some proper *alterations* of the present offices, on those two heads, might suffice ; which yet we have reason to fear, would not so well answer the purpose. However, either way, indulgence being shewn, and every Minister allowed the liberty, either to use what he finds in the sheets sent him ; or, if he

he likes that better, to keep to the present offices (which we suppose to remain exactly as they are;) here, it is evident, will be a method taken, which must be as unexceptionable as it is useful. For by this means, whilst a scrupulous conscience is with much prudence and charity relieved, one, that hath no scruple, being left just where it was, and having no injury done it, cannot have the least pretence to complain of any (γ).

And if in time, after competent and successful trial, it may seem advisable to do something further in relation to these and the like subjects, well and good: If not,——it will be of some service to have gone thus far; and our best Clergy (we will venture to say that for them) will rejoice even in this allowance, and be very thankful that it is granted them.

And as to learning the sense of such Clergy, touching these and the like things, which create any

(γ) We very well foresee the *difficulties*, that may be apprehended, in respect of leaving men at *liberty*. And those difficulties will probably be applied to other cases, besides those of the Baptism and Burial-offices. Well, what are those difficulties? There will be prejudice, there will be parties, there will be names of distinction, &c. Supposing there should; how long will they last? Will good sense and reason never take place? Shall we always be a bigoted and superstitious sort of people? And pray, (supposing that yet) which is to be regarded most, in the mean time, by our Governors, superstition and bigotry on the one side; or honor, conscience, and reason on the other?—Possibly, we may too long be fools. Possibly, also, we may in due time be wise. In hopes of being so by degrees, let us, when we can, and as we can, do something towards it; and prepare the way at least, if we can do nothing more at present. What would be the inconvenience of *repeling* some parts of the Act of uniformity, in favor of honest minds, and tender consciences? May this be done, or may it not be done, with safety? We submit this query to consideration. And when it is answered to satisfaction, we will readily own the force of the answer.

difficulties, or appear to them to deserve the consideration of their superiors; it is humbly supposed, that the sense of at least the major and more judicious part of this body of men throughout the kingdom, might soon and easily be learnt, if my Lords the Bishops shall be pleased, by such general agreement among themselves as they shall think proper, to order their Archdeacons to send circular letters to the Clergy within their respective Archdeaconries (peculiars included as far as may be) desiring each of them at a visitation therein fixt, to point out and deliver to the Archdeacon in writing (but sealed up and directed to the Bishop of the Diocese) what things they judge most exceptionable, and for good reasons could wish amended, either in our Liturgy, or in relation to any other part of our ecclesiastical constitution. And if sometime after this, it should be judged proper to desire them briefly to communicate their principal reasons, after the same manner, relating to such particulars, as any of them may have pointed out in the writing before-mentioned; it may be presumed, that nothing can then be wanting, which shall be thought requisite to answer the design of making such inquiries. And this, at least, we may venture to say further of the matter, upon recollecting what we have often seen and heard;—that such amiable condescension of the governing towards the governed Clergy, will exceedingly oblige the latter, and cause them to entertain the most honourable sentiments of such a set of worthy superiors, who thus humanely and candidly, and with such generous views, do vouchsafe, like the primitive Bishops, to consult the judgment of their inferior Brethren, concerning things, wherein they and the Church are so nearly interested. And without something of this sort being done, it may seem, and is thought, that the Clergy of the

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Land are not duly and adequately represented in Convocation (δ).

Nor are we destitute of precedents even here, with respect to the condescension of our *Bishops* towards their Clergy, and the encouragement they have given them to communicate their observations relating to certain subjects of this kind.—Thus the late excellent Bishop *Fleetwood*, in a charge to his Clergy of *S. Asaph*, 1710, invites them to give him notice in a private manner, relating to some suspected abuses and enormities, &c. Which so far answers our present purpose, as to shew, what that great man thought of allowing the Clergy, on proper occasions, to acquaint their Bishops with what they may judge to want rectifying, in reference to the Church.—Another Prelate as truly great, and every way an ornament to the episcopal character, we mean our present right reverend Bishop of *London*, hath shewed the same favorable disposition to receive from the hands of his Clergy, what intimations they should think proper to send in, to the like purpose; and which, we should imagine, must be designed by that wise and good man, to render our establishment, by degrees, more perfect than it is at present. For thus candidly and condescendingly doth his Lordship bespeak his Brethren in the ministry, at the close of his *Queries*, to the Clergy of the diocese of *Lincoln*, in the year 1717. *If you have observed any particular defects in the present canons or discipline of the Church;—[And] if you have any advices to give, or proposals to make, by which the glory of God, and the honor and interest of the Church may be promoted, or the government of this*

(δ) Vid. Bishop *Burnet*'s reflections on the rights of an *English* Convocation, p. 10, &c. Bishop *Kennet*'s eccl. Synods, p. 196, &c.

diocese be better ordered; I desire you freely to communicate your thoughts to me; and be assured, that a proper use shall be made of your suggestions, in order to the attainment of the ends proposed by them.—And we are farther informed, that a worthy successor of his Lordship, now presiding over that diocese, did, in a like paper of inquiries, issued out before his primary visitation, 1745, give free liberty to his Clergy to communicate to him their thoughts upon any subject they should judge necessary; inclosing the same in a cover, sealed up and directed to his Lordship.—Nor do we at all doubt, but several other chief Pastors of our Church have, as well lately as formerly, allowed the like liberty, and given like encouragement, to their Clergy, to apply to them with the same good view.

Now should their Lordships think fit, with one generous consent, and all in one year, to make such friendly proposals, as we have mentioned, to the Clergy of their respective dioceses; how easily might they learn the sentiments of all the more liberal, benevolent, and judicious part of that body, throughout the kingdom? And what a noble treasure of useful and pertinent observations would their Lordships have then before them, relating to every article of our constitution, that may want to be improved or amended? Which being communicated by each of them, in a full assembly, and in the manner, that shall by each be judged most prudent, might afterwards be considered of by them and the Convocation.

Had some such methods as this been taken before now, and that by all our right reverend Fathers at one time, and upon the foot of one general agreement among themselves, according as they should have judged best, with this view; the present application

plication to their Lordships, and to our other Governors, would have been needless. And whenever such a generous invitation shall be made by their Lordships to their respective Clergy, the authors of this humble application will with pleasure unite in returning their thanks, as they now do in making their address; and not only so, but, if that also shall then be thought requisite, will join in setting their names, every one of them, to a congratulation and acknowledgment, so well merited by their Superiors, and so justly due from themselves.

We have here given you, indulgent Fathers, and other vigilant Guardians of our Church, our own free thoughts, joined with those of many serious and worthy persons, both among the Clergy and Laity, relating to what we humbly judge to be the proper measures towards laying a foundation for a complete review. Your Lordships and Brethren of the Synod will judge of them as you shall see reason. Nor do we at all doubt, but the candor of each of you will be made appear in the most amiable light, in the judgment you shall severally and conjunctly pass upon what we have offered.

Permit us now to go on with our observations.

It has been supposed, some pages back, that if a proper liberty be granted as there proposed, or as our Governors shall think fit to contrive a better, there will be no difficulty in introducing the desired alterations. The Gentlemen, who suggested to us the intimations, seem fully satisfied there will be none; adding, for the reasons before given, that it appears next to impossible there should be any. Now supposing what they say to be true, (nor can we well suppose it will upon trivial be found to be other-

otherwise,) we presume to add something to their observations, building upon the same plan.

We think then (and the Gentlemen we have mentioned, are exactly of the same mind) that some such proposals as those of the Lord-keeper *Bridgman* in sixty-eight, or (which would be still better) some improvements (ε) like those made by the ecclesiastical Committee in eighty-nine, would, by an expedient like that before suggested, gain an easy and very friendly reception with all the more sensible part of Clergy and people; the *latitude* proposed both gently making way for it, by degrees, and effectually obviating all pretences of encroachment; especially if (as, on some considerations, we could wish,) it might be thought adviseable, and ordered, that the proposals or improvements authorised should not take place, under some competent time

(ε) It seems those excellent writings, upon the breaking up of the Committee, were deposited in the Archives at *Lambeth*; and we are informed, that the present Lord Bishop of *London* hath a copy of them in his hands. They were undoubtedly, for good reasons, kept from public view at that time. But we hope the same reasons do not still continue; and that papers of that value, which the Public hath so long wished for, will at a favorable opportunity be permitted to see light. The present age seems to be in a far better disposition to receive and approve of them, than that was in which they were drawn up, and were intended to have been made public. Some account of what was then done may be seen in Dr. *Nichols's Apparat. ad def. Eccl. Anglic.* sect. 10. But by the way the Doctor is mistaken, and has led some other writers into mistake, with regard to what he says about the *Athanasian Creed*. For it was not to be left to the discretion of the Minister.—See also the Bishop of *Lincoln's* speech at Dr. *Sacheverel's* trial. *Complete History of England*, vol. III. and Bishop *Burnet's* history, vol. II. sub. an. 1689. Likewise the *Conclusion* to this latter history; and *Calamy's* abridgment, vol. I. ch. 17. Also *Tindal's* Continuation, vol. III. book 25. Dr. *Prideaux's* Letter to a Friend, 1689. And more particularly his Life, lately published, p. 52,—61.

from

from the first publication (Z), and that, during the interval, an act of Parliament, supposed to be obtained, or else a royal Proclamation, grounded upon such an Act, and relating to such an expedient, were enjoined to be publicly read in the Churches, at proper times, (suppose once a quarter, or oftner,) as several late Proclamations, calculated for the common good, and still in force, are ordered to be.

If a *query* should here occur, ‘ Whether the additions, alterations, or other improvements before-mentioned, and supposed to be sent to every Parish, &c. should not be in the hands of the congregation, as well as of the Minister; and consequently a far greater number of the additional sheets printed; which may perhaps, by some, be thought inconvenient?’—We humbly answer, that according to the best of our judgment, it may not be a matter of any great moment, whether such a thing be done or not; however, not at first, and for some time after.

If, on the one hand, such a thing shall be thought proper to be done, and that at first, all, who desire to have the improvements, may have them, if they please; and that at a very small expence. And surely it will not be thought improper, as it cannot be unlawful in the case supposed, to bind them up afterwards in some proper place, and in every proper size, with our Common-prayers. For if it be not esteemed either improper or unlawful (tho’ we have not yet learnt by what authority it is done) to bind up a little Treatise or two of private com-

(Z) This method of proceeding doth not seem disagreeable to the precedents we find to this purpose in our several *Acts of uniformity*; which allowed some intermediate time, more or less, before each of them respectively was to be in force.

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posure, with our Common-prayer, which has the stamp of public authority; we may well suppose it will not be judged to be either, to insert such additions, as carry upon them that stamp. The *Companion to the altar* (a very useful little treatise, we own, and well calculated, if we mistake not, for the service of our Church) is very commonly bound up with our Liturgy. Nor is it so done, we presume, without the knowledge and connivance of our Governors; much less without the desire and good liking of our people: An intimation this, (to speak the least) how little the latter would be offended, upon having the composures of *public authority* inserted.

Since our writing this, we observe the worthy *Society for promoting Christian knowlege* have thought fit to order two small, but very suitable tracts, to be prefixt to some of the lesser editions of the Common-prayer; making a charitable present of both to the poor, in the packets they disperse. One of them is intitled, *Directions for the devout and proper use of the common prayer, &c.* The other, *Directions for devout behavior in the public worship of God.* Without question this learned and discreet Society saw no reason (nor can there really be any) to apprehend the least danger or inconvenience, as likely to ensue from the liberty they have taken. And we can be pretty confident the members of our Church, especially the poorer and less learned, will receive considerable benefit from so pious a benefaction.

On the other hand, if no more copies should be thought proper to be dispersed at first, than what would suffice for the Ministers of our several Churches and Chapels; we do not want a public precedent even for this part of public conduct. For usually, there

there are no more copies of our *forms of prayer for public occasions* sent to every parish, than what are sent to the Minister only : And yet by the way (whether it be an impropriety or no, is not for us to judge) the congregations have their responses to make, which they have at the same time to seek. For surely none of our congregations can know, nor consequently make their responses, without having the copies, which contain them.——If it shall be said, ‘ They may purchase the copies,’ may it not as easily be said, that they may do the same in the case we have been proposing ? And then the objection, which we have above supposed, answers itself.

We would willingly have declined introducing this query, (which, perhaps, to some may seem of *small importance*) but that we are desirous, in an humble and candid manner, to obviate or remove, if we can, every supposed impediment : The doing of which, in the affair before us, seems to *us* to be of *no small importance*.

Having over and over revolved these things in our thoughts, viewed them in every point of light, and considered what, or whether any thing can, with any color of reason be urged, to make them appear less feasible ; we do ingenuously declare, that we can, at present, foresee but *one* objection (besides those we have considered) that seems to deserve our notice : Which is this, ‘ That, being a time of *war*, it is a time not so seasonable for entering upon consultations about affairs of the Church ; which should be done only in times of peace, especially when any *alterations* are proposed to be made.’

This objection, we can easily believe, is apt to make impression upon serious minds ; and carries per-

perhaps a more formidable aspect than any we have yet mentioned. However, let us not be too hasty in concluding either for or against it, 'till we have maturely weighed it. Let us deal fairly and ingenuously on both sides ; seek truth, study peace, and follow after the things that make for both ; leaving the Almighty, who is the author of both, to superintend all the great transactions of the world as he pleases. We need only do our duty (u) ; and our duty we ought to do, let the consequence be what it will. The great Arbiter of the universe can overrule all human affairs, and order them in such a manner, as that every event shall appear in the conclusion to be for the best ; most for the glory of his great name, most for the advancement of his religion, most for the benefit of human society. And tho' difficulties may intervene, (and difficulties we must sometimes expect) they will terminate by degrees in what is most desirable upon the whole, and most for the general good of the world.

(u) Our duty in the present case seems as clear, as our obligations to it are cogent ; and is, in one word, to *reform*. A reformation of public disorders may be supposed to be no less necessary, than that of private ones. And the latter will be too apt to grow, where the former are overlooked. To speak our minds freely ; it appears to *us* to be a duty as much incumbent upon Governors, to rectify what is amiss in the concerns of the Church, as it is upon private persons to reform what is so in their respective morals. God unquestionably expects the one ; and it will be difficult to shew that he less expects the other. We believe, and do hitherto maintain, that he expects both alike. Which will not appear strange to any, who shall be pleased to consider, that the great Ruler of the world regards public communities, as much at least as he does individuals. A reflection this, tho' perhaps less common, yet certainly not less just, for its not being more commonly taken notice of ; and we presume to add, that it is a reflection of far greater importance to communities, than our general partiality and indifference are apt to represent it to our thoughts. We could wish the Governors of every Christian community would be pleased to allow it some weight.

To

To the objection then. After having considered it with all the attention of mind, and all the equity of judgment in our power, we own we cannot yet see it carries all the weight and energy it is usually thought to do.—Let us look back a little to past times; going no further than the concerns of our own country. Our learned Governors will not take it amiss to be reminded of the æra of our *reformation*. If the present objection had then been thought to be of any force, it must not only have obstructed the progress, but even prevented the beginning, of that glorious undertaking. For it is evident, that our reformation was both begun and carried on, in very dangerous times. In the very midst of that great enterprize, we were engaged in wars abroad, and in civil commotions at home. And yet it pleased the providence of Heaven, to enable us to go on with our work, and bring it to a happy period, as far as the times would permit; notwithstanding all the difficulties we had to struggle with. It is better to trust to Providence, and do the work assigned us by it (going on in methods agreeable to its rules) than to be diffident of that almighty power, fear it should disappoint us, sit down, do nothing, and provoke it by such indolence.—Let us look back again to our memorable reformation, and ask, ‘ what hath God wrought ’ at that extraordinary crisis? What he hath wrought, may be seen in the chronicles of our Church and of our Country. What he hath wrought for both, by the means of wise and good men acting for the service of both, and that with the greatest vigor, even in perilous times, can never be forgotten by *us*, and, we fear, will never be forgiven by our adversaries. Let us carefully review the history of those times, and draw inferences from thence in favor of our own; not fearing disasters, not doubting but if any should arise, the same irresistible

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sistible arm, which controlled them in the days of our forefathers, will either prevent or suppress them in ours. Let candid and considerate men mark the various steps of Providence so visible in favoring our cause under the respective reigns of *Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth*; each of them times of great agitation, and more than common disturbance; and yet each of them attended with many happy events, which our reformation glories in to this day.—But *agitation and disturbance!* occasioned, you will perhaps think, by the attempt of reforming. Look deeper into history, and you will find something more at the bottom. And allowing that the reformation might have its share in the occasion (as, all things considered, how could it be avoided?) still, the reformation was then *new*, the prejudices against it were violent, and were the more so, as that age was less inlightened than the present.—Besides, the reformation stopped too soon, and was never rightly completed. Even under *Queen Elizabeth*, it was not carried on so far, as the perfection of religion required, or as the times would have allowed, or as some of the prime Governors of the Church could have wished, and did express their wishes. Nay, and what is more, history will shew, and men of observation will allow, that for many years after, it was apparently (we wish it be not still) upon the retrograde; and more than once in danger of being overturned, in the realm where its bulwark stood. The present age can look back, partly with pleasure, and partly with resentment, upon the conduct of the past. And the genius of it being now visibly prepared to embrace a farther reformation, with more unanimity and better temper than could be expected in former times, it seems proper to consider, whether it may not be full time (notwithstanding the present unsettled state of *Europe*) to make an amicable attempt to satisfy the

the reasonable wishes and just expectations of so many learned and sensible people in this our Island.— Let our engagement in war, instead of retarding, quicken our motions ; since we may justly hope the Almighty will the more prosper his Majesty's arms, and the more facilitate and expedite a happy peace, the more we exert ourselves to preserve, support, and advance his religion. If we neglect this, when the necessity is so urgent, the call so loud, and the desire so general ; can we rationally expect *that* dread Being, to whom we look up for favor in distress, will regard our applications, succeed our enterprizes, and scatter our enemies that delight in war ? Or can we hope, upon any just and reasonable grounds, that he will bless our endeavors to promote a religion, which we see, and must acknowledge wants, reforming ; but which, notwithstanding we see, notwithstanding we acknowledge it, we neglect to reform ?—Let not our neglect be our commendation at present, nor the remembrance of that neglect be our sorrow hereafter ; when we or our descendants may see (but too late) the unwished effects of such inexcusable security !

*Juppiter omnipotens, precibus si flecteris ullis,
Aspice nos, hoc tantum !*

We are sorry we are thus obliged to touch upon points of so delicate a nature, and to touch upon them in a manner so little agreeable to ourselves, as well as to our Governors. It can be no pleasure to us to exhibit, any more than it can be to them to receive, memorials of grievances. And the pleasure must be the less to either, when circumstances are apprehended to be so unfavorable to the good wishes of each of us. However, we must observe, that those circumstances are not like to become more favorable, either by silence on our parts, or disre-

gard on that of our Superiors. And with respect to those consultations about Church-affairs, which are so much wanted, but judged so unseasonable for these times of war, we must take the freedom to say, that we wish they had been entred upon in those times of peace, which we so long and so happily enjoyed, under the auspicious reign of his present Majesty, and of his royal Father: Both whose reigns have afforded us very desirable (but, in fact, too much neglected) opportunities to this purpose.— We could also wish the *Convocation-confest* (which was not perhaps so seasonable or so necessary) in the two preceding reigns, had never been entered upon; and that the present useful design had been then set on foot in the room of it; and carried on with some application, as far as the times would have borne.

And as to the unseasonableness of the present times for such a purpose, it will be further considered by men of observation, that there will be something unseasonable (at least either imagined, or pretended to be so) in *all* times: There will always, in short, be something objected, and some *remora* obtruded, to prevent doing what ought to be done: At which rate, we shall never have any thing done, but always continue as we are, to our no small disgrace, and (which we are sorry to say,) in some instances, to our almost more than beareable grievance. Witness some of those we have already pointed out; to which more may be added hereafter.

But surely it is not reasonable thus to postpone consulting about matters of moment; nor will it become us to stand trifling in an age of so much good sense. A true *English* Convocation will discern the times, and (having the countenance and authority of their Sovereign) will remove all ob-

jections, by entring upon the subject. This seems to all the more judicious men we converse with, to be the only way.—And, as to any *subsequent inconveniences*, that may be apprehended, they are persuaded they will (if any) be so few, so small, and of so short duration, that the *subsequent advantages* will more than make amends.

Suppose, that upon making some alterations, tho' ever so just, so apparently for the better, and so necessary to be made, we should lose some few men (tho' it is indeed a question, whether we shall lose any, unless, perhaps, here and there one, that is of a very singular turn of mind ;—yet, allowing the supposition, (will that loss be so great, and of such affecting consequence to the Church ? Or will it be any thing new and singular, and consequently surprising to us ?—As we take it, our Church is no stranger to such losses. We often have, we still do, and probably always shall, lose numbers from our communion, for want of making the requisite alteration. Supposing then (whether justly or no) that upon making such alterations, some few would leave us : The comfort is, that if they do, we shall soon have more and better in their room. And then our loss will be our gain.

But after all, it is not so true, that times of war, like the present, are so unseasonable for the present subject. If so, they are alike unseasonable for every *other* subject, that is now under consideration : And we know, that some of those subjects, as they are excellently calculated for the public benefit, are like to succeed, tho' in time of war. Nay, they are more likely to succeed even in such a time, for this reason ; because they are calculated for the common good, at a time when there is so much need of every friend-

ly concurrence to promote the welfare of our Country.

And since the design, now proposed, is evidently a peaceable design, calculated to unite rather than divide his Majesty's subjects, and consequently to strengthen the hands of the Government against those of its enemies; it would seem, that the present times are so far being unseasonable, on account of public war, that for this very reason, they appear the more highly seasonable for concerting all possible good measures, towards establishing our private peace.

But supposing, after all we have said, that it may, indeed, upon the whole, be better to postpone the consultation about a review, 'till after the wars are over: Well, to give content, we agree to it.——But then may we entertain any reasonable hopes, that we shall in good earnest engage in such a consultation after the wars are ended? If so, we imagine every reasonable man will wait with patience, 'till that happy period. But if it should be found afterwards, that nothing is done, nothing is attempted, nothing intended to be done; how will our hopes be blasted? And what opinion shall we then entertain, either of the force of the present objection, or of the sincerity of those who make it? For will it not be evident to the world, that, after all, we only mean to gain time; and when we have gained it, to make no use of it in the end? Will any one imagine we were in earnest in our objection?——However, this is only *supposing* the worst, and, upon that supposition, giving our Argument its just force. But that charity, which *believeth all things, and hopeth all things* for the best, inclineth us to hope, and even to believe, that whenever it shall please God to send us a happy peace, we shall

shall with gratitude acknowledge our deliverance from troubles ; and with pleasure engage in a work, which will be the best proof of the sincerity of our gratitude. May God dispose our hearts to consider ; and considering, to understand ; and understanding, to follow after the things, which make for peace and piety !

But enough upon this head. The objection seemed plausible, and we have considered it. Whether we have given it a just answer, is left to others to consider.

If any difficulty now remains, it is easy to discern, after so much fair and particular examination, that it can lie only here :— ‘ All the particulars proposed, (how much soever any or all of them may deserve to be rectified) are out of the power of the Governors of the Church, and lie wholly in the breast of the *State*. ’

Well, and if they do, we would not from thence conclude, that there is no remedy ; and that the State will not concern itself about the welfare of the Church. We have reason to think otherwise, and much better of the State ; and cannot think more respectfully of the Governors of the Church, than by flattering and even persuading ourselves, that they will not fail petitioning the State, for leave to do their duty, if they find they are under any restraint from doing it for want of such leave. And without trying the success of a dutiful and loyal petition to this purpose, the present objection will appear to be insufficient ; unless it can at the same time be affirmed (which we presume it never will by those, who know the equity, mildness, and condescension of our present Government) that our ecclesiastical

Superiors dare not so much as present such a petition.

We hope then, that upon these considerations, this objection, like all the foregoing, is sufficiently removed : And must observe next, that tho' some farther objections (and perhaps some very plausible ones) should be made against a trial ; yet if there be, as certainly there is, an apparent *necessity* of making one ; that necessity ought, in reason, to over-rule all such objections.

But last of all, supposing none of these observations should hold good (as it is much, if none of them will ;) yet the safe and easy expedient suggested to us by those Gentlemen we have mentioned, will sufficiently obviate, and effectually invalidate, all objections of this, or of any other kind ; and that, whether proposed at this, or at any other time.

But we remind ourselves of our duty and design ; and having possibly exceeded both on these heads, do ingenuously ask, and hope we shall readily obtain pardon, at the hands of our most indulgent and condescending Governors, if in any respect we have transgressed ; having this only to say in our excuse, that if we have so done (which yet we have done unwittingly) we have but given the sentiments of some of the gravest and most eminent men of our Church and Nation. And for ourselves, who think we have the justest reasons to concur with them in their judgment, we add no more but this : Our Governors, to whom we apply, as they are discreet and wise, are also well affected towards the Church of *England* ; and discerning what is amiss, and can be rectified, in her constitution, as well as the best manner of doing it, will, with consummate wisdom,

wisdom, and tender love for the Church and her children, consult the welfare of the one, and satisfaction of the other, by a seasonable review ; and in due time, by that means, do just honor to both, as well as to themselves.

A Sequel to the foregoing Section.

A sensible and observing Clergyman in one of our midland counties (well known for his honest freedom and bluntness) after having perused this part of the work, returns it with these words, which seem to deserve our inserting. [His free manner of expressing himself, all genuine and sincere, will be excused.]——‘ Let a Liturgy (says he) well reformed, and enjoined by proper authority, be brought to me, tho’ but upon a *Saturday* evening ;—let an injunction be prefixt, which I am ordered to read ; and I will read them both the next morning in my Church, with the utmost readiness and pleasure ; and not only so, but will even engage, that not one soul in my parish will say the least word against either. And what I say of my own parish, I dare venture to say of all other parishes in my neighbourhood, and in all this county, of which I have any knowledge. It is a joke to say, *The thing cannot be done ; it will not take ; there will be opposition, &c.* Why, *who* will oppose it ? Who dares oppose it ? Or, if any offers, who *can* oppose it to any purpose ? If you say—*Our people are wedded to their old Common-prayer ;* I readily grant—they are for a Common-prayer, they are for no other method of praying ; but then, that they are so wedded (or if you chuse to say bigoted) to their old Common-prayer, as that they will hear of no other, not even of any amendment of their old, is more than I know,

‘ and more than I can believe to be true. On the
 ‘ contrary, I am persuaded, that if the old be im-
 ‘ proved, it will be liked the better, and an im-
 ‘ pression, that shall have any thing *new* in it, will
 ‘ soon go off. This I judge from the great de-
 ‘ mand there is for those editions of the Common-
 ‘ prayer, which you mention, *viz.* such as have lit-
 ‘ tle tracts of private compofure inserted in them.
 ‘ Which plainly indicates to me the disposition of
 ‘ the people, and convinces me, that there is no
 ‘ fear of any opposition from Them. Let *them*
 ‘ have but a *Common-prayer*, a tolerable one at least,
 ‘ and they trouble themselves no further. As to
 ‘ the framing and reframing it, they leave that whol-
 ‘ ly to their Governors, and never question their au-
 ‘ thority, nor labor in criticizing upon what they
 ‘ enjoin: For that, they conceive, belongs only to
 ‘ men of learning. Indeed, it would be a much
 ‘ easier matter than is commonly imagined, for their
 ‘ Governors to make the alterations, that may be
 ‘ wanted. If the King and Parliament enjoin a
 ‘ thing, it is submitted to at once. But if, in ad-
 ‘ dition to this, the Bishops and Clergy shall think
 ‘ fit to *recommend* what is enjoined, or if the Bishops
 ‘ shall think it proper to *counsel* the Clergy so to do;
 ‘ the point, I think, is effectually gained, and no-
 ‘ thing further remains to be done, besides an af-
 ‘ fectionate and devout reading of what is so en-
 ‘ joined, and so recommended.

‘ I have here given you my free Sentiments upon
 ‘ the subject, and not without thought. For I had
 ‘ long and often dwelt upon it: before you wrote,
 ‘ and communicated your papers. I have convers-
 ‘ ed a great while among mankind, as you know;
 ‘ and, what you may not know, I have for many
 ‘ years been making attentive observations upon
 ‘ their sentiments and tempers: The result of which
 ‘ obser-

‘ observations, as far as concerns this point, I have
 ‘ here delivered to you with great sincerity.

‘ And now, as to your *other* request. To give
 ‘ you, as you desire, my frank opinion of your ar-
 ‘ guments, I can only say this to you; that you
 ‘ seem to have labored the point too much.—You
 ‘ have a noble cause for certain, and I am sure a
 ‘ very just one. Every reasonable man will allow
 ‘ it. And whether the less reasonable part of men
 ‘ will allow it or no, is no matter. For you are
 ‘ not to stand by their judgment, nor will your
 ‘ cause be determined by it. But then, my Friends,
 ‘ (for I speak to you now as a society) have you
 ‘ not been too anxious about it, and laid out your
 ‘ learning and whole heap of arguments in such a
 ‘ manner, as if you thought no-body would be-
 ‘ lieve you, unless you did all that could be done
 ‘ upon the subject, and that at once? What occa-
 ‘ sion for this? Why do you take us for such a te-
 ‘ nacious and incredulous set of people? We are
 ‘ neither. We believe the Gospel, and can ap-
 ‘ prove of reason. We love truth and peace, and
 ‘ respect our Governors. We submit to every ordi-
 ‘ nance of man for the Lord’s sake; and, if we
 ‘ are not *tampered* with, shall always do it with a
 ‘ willing heart. So that when you propose and
 ‘ urge a review (which is one of the most reason-
 ‘ able things in the world to be proposed and urged)
 ‘ you seem to have forgot the goodness of our dis-
 ‘ positions, tho’ not the goodness of your own
 ‘ cause. When you plead so earnestly as you do,
 ‘ and ought, for a revival of the Common-prayer,
 ‘ you argue where no man of sense will oppose you.
 ‘ Men of sense, it is true, may differ from you in
 ‘ some points; but will agree with you upon the
 ‘ whole. So that you needed not, in my opinion,
 ‘ to have expended half the pains you have done,
 ‘ to

‘ to convince men (especially those you chiefly ap-
 ‘ ply to) concerning a point, about which they are
 ‘ convinced already. The point is clear to all that
 ‘ will consider: And those, that will not, how are
 ‘ they judges?—Do one thing, if you can: En-
 ‘ gage our Governors to set about a review, and
 ‘ they will soon be joined, and their orders obeyed.
 ‘ Our Governors own, that a review is wanted. All
 ‘ people see it. Who will obstruct it? If any do,
 ‘ they will soon be defeated, by superior learning,
 ‘ and superior power; yet a power and learning
 ‘ founded upon reason and common sense. To
 ‘ which let opponents, if any, reply as they can.—
 ‘ —I am, &c.’

Our very worthy friend has given us his thoughts
 with the utmost freedom and honesty. We only
 wish his observations may prove just. And num-
 bers will rejoice to find he is not mistaken.

S E C T. XIII.

*The Conclusion; wherein some farther consi-
 derations are urged in support of this Ad-
 dress; and particularly with regard to its be-
 ing made at this time.*

AN D now, most honored Christian Prelates,
 and very much honored Christian Divines,
 having thus far trespassed upon your patience, per-
 haps much longer than may be decent for us, or a-
 greeable to you, tho’ with the greatest submission in
 every point we have proposed; we would here draw
 to a conclusion of this part of our address; in-
 treating your greatest candor in judging of every
 part of it, and of the manner in which it is ma-
 naged;

naged; and hoping that candor will admit of what follows, as a slender but well-meant apology for both, and for the particular timing of what is offered.

In the foregoing papers we have ingenuously and respectfully laid before you our sentiments relating to some things in our ecclesiastical constitution, which we have long and seriously thought may deserve your animadversion; and which some of the greatest, the wisest, and best men, that ever adorned our communion, from the dawn of the Reformation down to this time, have considered in the same light, and wished amended in the same manner, as we have done.

We have exhibited them to your view and consideration, at a time when these things (important in themselves, and interesting to us) cannot be hid from the penetration of the more judicious of the Laity, any more than they can escape the attention of the more serious among the Clergy; and when, we have reason to believe, they have deeply affected more than a few, both of the one sort and of the other.

We have represented these things to you at a juncture, when looseness of principles, and debauchery of morals, are spreading in the land; when levity sways the judgment, and ridicule the conversation of most men: and when things sacred and solemn do least of all escape the unbecoming freedoms of both.

We have proposed them at an interval, when the strictest observations are made upon the belief and devotions, as well as lives and manners of the Clergy;—when ecclesiastical authority, and the determinations

terminations of councils, are no longer revered;— and when nothing will be admitted, or but decently tolerated, that will not bear the nicest scrutiny, and appear to be free, not only from superstition and error, but from all other just or even plausible exceptions.

These things are laid before you, right reverend Lords, and reverend Gentlemen, at a season, when the Clergy of the establishd Church are, in the general, as studious and inquisitive, as intelligent and learned, and withal as moderate in their sentiments, relating to all the lesser circumstances of religion, as any set of men at this day in the Christian world : And when, at the same time, our fellow-protestant Divines of the several dissenting denominations (especially those, who approach the nearest to ourselves) appear to be men of as much good sense, good learning, and good breeding, as most other men ; and to concur with us as heartily and effectually, in defending and promoting our common Christianity, upon the great and common principles, as we could wish or desire any men to do, who are in every thing of our mind ; and who, therefore, we may justly hope, as well as candidly suppose, would not recede or vary from us, if there did not lie some obstructions in their way, which even we ourselves, the most unprejudiced of us, at least, cannot but wish were removed, as well for their sakes as ours.

These sentiments are offered to you at a period, when the sentiments of many among yourselves (to your praise is it now mentioned, and to your honor be it for ever recorded) are, in many instances, if not in all, well known to be the same ; and when, from this just spirit of liberty and reason, as well as of amiable candor and Christian benevolence, you
raise

raise in us reasonable and almost promising expectations, that those sentiments will, by degrees, on mature consultation among yourselves, and with legal commission from our Sovereign, be carried into happy execution.

These thoughts are presented to your view at a turn, when you are all, we are persuaded, very thankfully sensible of the hand of Providence in preserving our ecclesiastical establishment from the late tempts of Popery and arbitrary power; and when, we humbly believe, it may well become you to evidence your sense and your thankfulness, not only by supporting that establishment, but (what may surely strengthen its support) by rectifying, as far as you shall be able, what may be yet amiss in it; since the clemency of Heaven, for ought we know, may on purpose have secured it to us, to the intent, that it may be rectified.

These humble proposals are submitted to your judgment, at a crisis, when the just moderation of friends, and the unjust combination of enemies, render it peculiarly suitable, highly expedient, and, in some sort, absolutely necessary, to give proper attention to a design of this nature:—When our Sovereign, one of the mildest and justest of Princes, and the most generously intent upon the good of his kingdom, and particularly, the chief Defender as well as national Head of the Church of *England*, will, without question, readily concur with his august Senate, and reverend Convocation, in all proper measures, tending to advance her honor, and strengthen her interest:—When the principal Nobility and Gentry of the Land, continuing still in our communion as an establishment, (and whom it is our duty and interest to secure therein, by all equitable and honorable endeavors,) are of a disposition

tion and temper to join with his Majesty, and the Synod, in every just proposal, calculated for the honor of the Church, and support of the protestant religion:—When his Majesty, with his Nobles and Commons, are earnestly engaged in removing all impediments to our national happiness, and taking all proper measures to secure and improve it, by making new and just regulations to unite his subjects, in loyalty to his crown, in friendship to one another, and in attachment to the public welfare:—And when it will greatly add to the glory of his Majesty's reign, above those of all preceding Princes upon the throne of *Great-Britain*, to have united his subjects in their religious concerns, removed the obstacles, that lay in their way to union, and made the Church of *England*, more than ever, to flourish under his auspicious government; as settled upon a larger and stronger foundation than ever it hath been heretofore:—When men of all denominations, united in the protestant scheme and in loyalty, seem earnestly desirous of, and heartily forward to meet in a happy coalition; it being on all hands agreed, at this time especially, to be for the security of the government, and of the protestant interest, to unite, as much as possible, in sacred, as well as in civil concerns:—When, on the opposite side, we have adversaries in almost every shape, both to our government as revolutionary, and to our religion as protestant; yea, and even as Christian:—All which adversaries do in effect, tho' not in intention, incessantly warn us, to be upon our guard; and to take the first favourable opportunity of uniting among ourselves; and that, upon the largest and most catholic principles; which alone can do real honor to our Church and government, and will best defeat the designs of the adversaries of both.

These

These requests are made to you at a point of time, when there is a prevailing, tho' more secret dissatisfaction to be observed in many, not only of the superior and more intelligent, but even of the inferior and less discerning (yet well-meaning) members of our communion, on the account of some particulars, which we have mentioned:—When some of them, on that account, seem more than a little inclined to leave us, and to go over to some other communion, where they judge there are fewer corruptions, or less deficiencies, in spiritual matters:—When others, in no inconsiderable numbers, have, of late years especially, made an open, and seemingly irrecoverable defection from our communion; and many (it is said) are still making a like defection from it:—And when all, who are in it, and who seriously consider about the amendments proposed, join in wishing, not only that they may be made, but (as we have more than once intimated) that they may be made in time; as apprehending consequences, which, at a longer or shorter run, may prove pernicious, if not prevented by wise and seasonable precautions.

Finally, these considerations are tendred to our worthy and gracious Superiors, not with the undiscerning zeal, or unchristian virulence, of a bigoted and party-spirit (which hath but too much and too long disturbed our peace) but, what perhaps can scarce be said of all, if, absolutely, of any preceding applications, they are addressed to you with a seasonable and becoming privacy; with a sincere esteem for your persons, for your dignity, for your office; with a tender regard for the welfare of the community, and particularly for the honor and improvement, as well as security and preservation, of this protestant Church: And this by men, who are se-

date

date and serious, thoughtful and studious, humble and conformable, quiet and peaceable : Whose great desire it is to know truth, and to follow it ; to understand Christianity, and to practise it ; and the great end of all whose studies and endeavors is, to advance the glory of God, and the happiness of mankind.

If these considerations are of any moment, they will have their due weight, at *this* time, with a body of men, who are discreet and learned, considerate and consciencious ; and upon whose discretion and learning, consideration and conscience, we lay no ordinary stress in making this application.—Which having done, we have done all in our power : We have borne our testimony ; we have discharged our conscience. The rest is left with *you*. And may the God of Heaven impress it on your hearts, and direct and assist you in a right execution !

We have now finished our address. And having reviewed it, not without the greatest Satisfaction in our honest meaning, (we wish we could also say, with the greatest hope of being regarded,) we will here close it up, with a few humble reflections relating to the whole, and to the character of the Synod, to whom we present it.

If it had been possible for us to have drawn up this address with more evenness of temper, greater gentleness of expression, or clearer indications of regard for our worthy Superiors and the Church ; or to have presented it to them, with a more honorable privacy ; we would have done it with a pleasure, exceeded only by the sincerity of our intention, and the justness of our zeal.

We

We think, we have no reason to apprehend any frowns from our Governors, for the application we have made.—The obligingness of our address, the reasonableness of our requests, the privacy of our application, the integrity of our design, the affection, the esteem, the good wishes we have evidenced for the Church and its welfare;—any one of them singly, and all of them conjunctly, may very well secure us from such apprehensions.

Besides, we have a great opinion of the moderation and temper of the Governors we apply to; who are observed in the main to be more humane, and less rigid, more condescending to their brethren, and less apt to be offended at dutiful addresses on this subject, than many preceding Governors of the Church.

And the Church itself, over which they preside, is also represented by most of the learned men of her communion, and particularly by two (η) of the greatest note, under the amiable character of an *indulgent mother to her children*. And since the *National Synod* is asserted (ι) to be that very Church by representation, which is so indulgent a mother; we have all the assurance we can well desire, that as we have applied to the Synod, we have applied to a Church, that will shew herself a mother the most indulgent to *us*: And we accordingly hope, by happy experience, to find the encouraging effects of her parental indulgence; not only in a kind toleration of our address, but also in granting, as far as she shall be able, what we shall be found to have asked in moderation and reason.

(η) Archbishop *Laud*, and Bishop *Bull*.

(ι) Canon 139.

What we have or shall ask further than this, (which we are not conscious we have done here, nor have any intention of doing on any other occasion,) we neither expect nor desire it may be granted.——If we have asked any thing to the prejudice of this Church, we desire pardon of the Church, and of God ; hoping it will for ever be forgotten and forgiven by both.

Hujus denique Ecclesiae auctoritati atque examini totum hoc, sicut & cætera quæ ejusmodi sunt, universa reservamus ; ipsius, si quid aliter sapimus, parati judicio emendare.

D, Bern, ep. ad Can. Lugdun.

P O S T-

POSTSCRIPT.

Containing some occasional Observations, occurring upon a review of the whole.

Addressed to the Public in general.

THE great desire we have to maintain peace and charity with all men, and to prevent, as far as in our power, all altercations, either with or between any of our fellow-Christians, in a subject of this nature, is the occasion of our subjoining this *Postscript*.

Our preliminary *advertisement*, and whole inquiry, have, we hope, sufficiently shewn, how much we are inclined to peace and love; and how earnestly we wish the reformation of this Church, in a way consistent with both. If we here renew our assurances to this purpose, and give fresh indications of the benevolence of our temper, every good man will be the more convinced of the integrity of our design, and a bad man will have the less to say in disparagement of it.

We shall speak our minds honestly and ingenuously, as we have all along done; and if, in the fulness of our heart, we shall happen to touch again upon some things we may any where have mentioned before, this will easily be forgiven us by men of candor and sincerity: And we shall be the less scrupulous about re-exhibiting the thoughts, which

such a fulness of heart shall suggest, as we are here taking our leave of the several subjects we have been considering ; and as our repeted declarations to one and the same purpose will shew, that we close our design with the same benevolent mind, with which we began it.

In the first place, we have a *request* to make to the Public, whom we now address ; more especially to our brethren, both Clergy and Laity, of the Church of *England* : With whom we shall always desire to maintain a loving, catholic, and Christian agreement, in every point of pure religion, and in every circumstance agreeable to it, as long as we live.

Our request is this ; that we have no unfriendly debates upon this argument ; nor, by our unhand-some treatment of each other, give occasion to our common adversaries to heighten a contention, which they will be but too eager to push forward, when they can hope to make their advantage of it from the imprudences of those, who engage in it.—We can seriously declare, for our own parts, that in our way of managing this subject, we have done the utmost in our power to prevent all unbrotherly quarrel ; and to pave the way towards a more free and more amicable discussion, of whatever may concern truth, and the welfare of this Church, that hath hitherto been usual, when this subject hath been debated.

If, therefore, in the measures we have taken, we have shewn an uniform regard to truth and peace ; if in our handling so difficult a subject, we have endeavored to act as became Christians and men of reason, friends to religion, and friends to our constitution ; if, above all, we have acted as a sincere con-

conscience directed us, according to the best judgment we could form in the matters, upon which we have treated ; we have the justest reason to hope we have afforded no handle for *controversy* ; much less for chagrin or virulence in the management of any, that may be set on foot upon this occasion. And we would willingly flatter ourselves, that if any strictures shall be made upon what we have offered, they will be in the same spirit of candor and benevolence, and in the same language of decency and good manners, which we have all along used, or endeavored to use, in this whole performance. If otherwise, we must declare again, as we did in another place, that we have no purpose at present, to make any other returns to those who shall think fit to oppose us, but our benevolent prayers and friendly good wishes in their favor ; leaving the Public to judge, and truth to make its way, as far as it can, and ought in all reason to be permitted to do.

Notwithstanding our zeal for Christianity, and every thing tending to the advancement of it in this Church ; we are not so sanguine as to suppose, that every member of it, or every one, who is not a member, will be exactly of our mind in every thing we have advanced. Should we expect this, we should be unreasonable, and seem to forget the common nature of men. But we may venture to say, that we have good grounds to believe there will not be a man of sense found in all *England*, who will not approve, and give his verdict in favor of some or other of the things we have proposed. And if any man, who differs from us in some particulars, shall in others think fit to declare his approbation publicly ; and, in concurrence with us, apply to our Governors in behalf of what he so approves, and desires may be established ; he will be intitled, not only to our private esteem, but public thanks,

even for this smaller effort to do service to his religion and country. And if also he shall be so good as to admonish, and shall, in fact, be so happy as to convince us, in any instance, where he shall think us to be wrong; he will be sure, upon our conviction, to receive our public acknowledgements and farther thanks, together with all the marks of esteem and love we shall be capable of shewing, to one, who shall appear to have nothing but truth and the public good in view.

Conscious of the great imperfections of our work, and apprehensive of the many censures it may be liable to, we shall now endeavor, in the fairest manner we can, to satisfy men of reason, concerning whatever we can well foresee may be likely to incur a blame. But then, we can touch only upon general topics; leaving it to the candor of the Public, to apply particulars, as they shall think reasonable.

1. If we have *erred* in any point, we can assure the Public that we have not done so knowingly and wilfully: And we must again and again declare, that we desire to be set right in a candid manner by those inquisitive, judicious, and ingenuous minds, that shall discover any error of *moment* in what we have written.

2. If we have any where, either thro' inadvertency, or a well-meaning zeal in the cause of religion, expressed ourselves in a manner less proper, or less agreeable to the taste of any readers, than they or we could wish; it is hoped the good-natured part of mankind will put a favorable construction upon such slips of our pens, and impute them, not to the want of greater respect for those we address, but to that of better skill in writing and

addressing. We have endeavored to keep a just guard over our temper and sentiments all the way we have gone, so as in neither to offend (or offend as little as possible) against sobriety or charity. Let our failings then of *this* kind also, if requiring or deserving any public notice, be pointed out to us with moderation and equity, and we shall receive the intimations with thankfulness and love.

3. If any little improprieties of style, any verbal inaccuracies, any unnecessary redundancies, or any returns of similar observations (almost unavoidable in such a work as this) have any where escaped us in the course of these writings; as we shall not think it needful to make apology for such over-sights, so neither will good judges (who are always observed to be the most candid) expect it. With such therefore we dare freely trust them, being well assured they will pass them over with lenity and condescension.

4. If in any particular and less material instances, some of our observations shall be judged to be less necessary (*), or any of our arguments to be less valid and conclusive; yet, may we not reasonably ask this favor, *viz.* that our application may have a fair hearing on the *whole*? And that if *some* particulars will not bear the stress we may seem to lay upon them, others may be allowed that, which they will bear? — Men of equitable dispositions, accustomed to fair reasoning, and willing to do justice to every subject as far as it shall deserve, are not
or.

(*) It is readily confessed, that in some of the larger sections, and notes underneath them, (for instance, Sect. 5. and in that, perhaps, more than in any other) we have here and there thrown in some particular observations, which to some sort of

apt to single out particulars (λ), and infer from each, or from any of them taken separately, that the whole design is unjustifiable. But they consider it altogether in a collective view, observing chiefly where the main stress is laid, and whether the argument, on the whole, deserves the consideration of the public. If particulars are, in their judgment, wrong, they express that judgment of them with candor, and never conclude, that the main cause is affected, much less overturned, by any defects they observe in these.

— *Amicus dulcis, ut æquum est,
Cum mea compenset vitiis bona, pluribus hisce
(Si modò plura mihi bona sunt) inclinet, amari
Si volet : hac lege, in trutinâ ponetur eadem.*

If then, any particulars occurring in the course of these papers should be thought wrong (and it is possible enough, that several may deserve to be so thought) yet let not the whole of it be laid aside,

readers may appear more curious than useful, and to others more nice than pertinent. As to which, every reader being left to his own judgment, which we neither desire, nor shall endeavor to dispossess him of, all we shall say is, that the observations appear still to us, to be both pertinent and useful ; and may, we believe, appear so to others, when they shall be pleased to reconsider them. This, at least, we may venture to affirm with some confidence, that whenever our Governors shall think fit to engage in a *Review*, they will find even the minutest of the observations we have made, to be of some service. For that will be a time to sift every thing to the bottom, and leave no objection unheeded. — But this remark has already been made in our favor by the two learned friends, to whom we are indebted for the *Preface*.

(λ) This seems to be a fault, that controversial writers, of all others, are too commonly addicted to. But nothing surely can be more unfair or ungenerous ; nor does any thing tend more to puzzle an argument, and lengthen out a controversy. Lord *Clarendon's* observations on this piece of conduct, (which he justly blames in one of his posthumous essays) may well deserve to be considered.

or judged altogether undeserving of public regard, on the account either of some less important observations, or some less material deficiencies. However erroneous we may be supposed to be in some points, or short of proof in others, we cannot easily be persuaded we are so in all. We dare freely, as we do frequently, appeal to reason, and just judgment, in relation to the bulk and main scope of our design; nor are apprehensive, that even particulars can many of them be justly, or will any of them be severely blamed.

Surely it will without much difficulty be allowed, by men of impartial observation, that some things are wrong in our establishment; at least, that they are not altogether right, and may very well deserve to be made better than they are. If therefore we have pointed out some, if we have pointed out several, much more if we have pointed out many of these, and all together confirm the observation; will not this be sufficient to our purpose, to justify our undertaking, and to shew, that the main cause we have in hand is still good, and ought consequently to be regarded, even tho' some of the particular arguments, whereby we have endeavored to support it, should not be found to be equally pertinent, or equally forcible?—We are encouraged to hope, however, upon reviewing the whole, and considering the importance of it taken all together, that we shall so far gain the point we have in view, as to put our Governors upon deliberating, whether a revisal may not be necessary; a revisal, at least, of such branches of our constitution, as shall seem most to deserve, and most to require it, at the hands of such Governors.

If by any thing we have attempted, we shall prove in any degree instrumental towards bringing
on

on (what is so much desired by most men of candor) a reform, tho' but a moderate, tho' but an imperfect one; we shall have some reason to hope, that future times may bring on a more complete one; and that our having paved the way towards it, tho' but at a distance only, may be reckoned to be doing some service to our Church and Country.

Nevertheless, if after all that we have so honestly and so respectfully written, the suspicion commonly prevailing in human nature, and prejudicing mankind against the best designs, should still remain, and nothing that we have said or done can possibly remove it; we have then no more to do, but to refer our cause to God, and to every honest man's conscience, to which we speak as in the sight of God; not doubting but it will one day appear to be the cause of that God, to whose judgment we refer it, and to whose blessing we recommend it.



A N

APPENDIX:

Setting forth the

Concurring JUDGMENT and DECLARATIONS
of several learned MEN of the Church of
England, relating to some of the principal
Points contained in the foregoing DISQUI-
SITIONS.

With REFERENCES to the Observations of many
other learned Persons of the same Church.

*Et quanquam apud bonos judices satis habeant firmitatis, vel tes-
timonia sine argumentis, vel argumenta sine testimoniis; nos tamen
non contenti alterutro sumus, cum suppetat nobis utrumque; ne cui
perverse ingenioso, aut non intelligendi, aut contra differendi, locum
relinquamus. Lactant. de verâ sap. l. 4.c. 22.*

*Admittitis enim nos probare, quodcunque defendimus. Tertull.
apol. c. 31.*



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APPENDIX.

Learning North the

Yours continued in the following direction:-

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A P P E N D I X.

IT is easily foreseen, that this subsequent part of our undertaking, if we would execute it in the manner we desire, and once designed, would nearly (if not more than) equal the former in bulk. For the materials, all ready at hand, and all pertinent to the purpose, are so numerous. We shall therefore, for the present, cut our work short, and be content with exhibiting a few specimens; reserving the rest, if there shall be occasion, for some further opportunity.

Before we engage in our design, we think it proper to make some previous observations.

1. We lay no farther stress upon *authority*, than we find it to be rational and just. If in some cases it should operate more upon others than upon ourselves, the blame is not ours. We produce it, as we find it, making it neither better nor worse. Nor should we, perhaps, produce it at all, but to comply with the prevailing turn, which seems fond of authorities; and to shew to the world, that we advance no opinion, but what hath been sufficiently warranted by the best Churchmen. Otherwise we should have thought, that reason and fact would have been enough for our purpose; having no more to do but to produce facts, and argue upon them, leaving the Public to judge. This we have endeavored to do in the Disquisitions.

2. We

2. We are of opinion, that it is sufficient for us to give *direct* testimonies. A plain declaration in our favor is enough; tho' it should be found to be afterwards qualified. For a subsequent qualification does not invalidate a former assertion; nor will our regard for an author give us leave to suppose it does, where we are willing to think him consistent. In the present undertaking, we have no concern with nice *qualifications*, but with plain *concessions*. Those may stand as they can: These we shall claim the advantage of, as being directly to our purpose. For they will shew at least, that something is to be conceded. And we desire no more than the concession will give us. This we shall retain, 'till it shall be shewn, that we have no right to it, and that the proposition we exhibit cannot hold true, as it stands detached from the subsequent observations; or unless it shall be made appear, that we mistook the sense of an author in what he has thought fit to assert, and we have judged proper to produce.

To explain our meaning a little further. Suppose a candid author should make this concession: 'As to the lawfulness or unlawfulness of what is established, I cannot indeed help judging that to be inexpedient, which to me appears to be so: And as I acknowledge for myself, so I presume I may for the *greater part* of my Brethren, that we judge our present constitution might, in many respects, to be altered for the better: Some of us imagine we see defects in one part, and some in another.' Is not this general declaration sufficient for the design we have in hand? If it is, we, for our parts, need look no farther; our argument not requiring it, being already sufficiently countenanced by such a declaration, even tho' the author should not

not intend it for this purpose; and tho' he should add immediately after, nay, and add with great appearance of reason, ' But we all know, that in ' questions of expediency, it is our bounden duty, ' and what the nature of all society requires, that ' we should submit our several private Judgments to ' the Judgment of public authority,' &c. In this latter declaration we have no concern; because our argument, in its main scope, does not extend so far. For we only undertake to shew, what we suppose such an author to allow, *that our present constitution might* [and we presume to add, ought] *in many respects to be altered for the better.* The other part of the question may be discussed at leisure, by those, who may be more immediately concerned: Which we think *we* are not at this time. And yet we judge, that the question may very well deserve discussing, as it concerns the common right of men to judge for themselves; being nevertheless duly respectful to the decisions of their Superiors, and complying, as far as possible, with the terms of public peace.

3. The reasonings of some authors being prolix, and sometimes perplexed and intricate, and part of them being nothing to our purpose (yet not making against us;) we take the liberty to contract and connect them, when we see it necessary or expedient so to do. Which liberty nevertheless, we take, upon the whole, but seldom; most of the authors we quote, being sufficiently clear and concise, and at the same time expressing their meaning with as much strength and fulness, as our argument requires.—We must add,

4. That several very material observations of a more general nature, relating to our design, as taken in a complex view, must necessarily be passed over for

for the present, for want of room to exhibit them ; tho' they might make a proper volume upon another occasion, being managed by abler hands. We shall just mention the several points we once had in our design, and which we still think we could easily make out from the best authorities.

(1.) That the *reformation* of our Church was never brought to that perfection, which the first undertakers and promoters of it intended ; and which many of the worthiest of their successors have desired and pleaded for since.

(2.) That the making of *alterations* in an ecclesiastical establishment is often expedient, and sometimes necessary.

(3.) That our own constitution *allows* of such alterations, and has left the Governors at liberty. Which may be proved from express declarations of our national Church, as well as from the judgment and declarations of her best Writers.

(4.) That *absolute uniformity* is not strictly necessary ; that religion does not require it ; that the insisting upon it is inconsistent with the great end of religion ; that it doth not answer the design of the civil State in appointing it ; that it rather obstructs that design, as might be evidenced by many instances ; and that therefore it might seem better upon the whole, (as reason suggests, and as experience shews in some other countries) if Christian governments would think fit to allow a greater latitude in this respect.—Consequently,

(5.) That some *ceremonies* at least might very well be dispensed with, in order to a greater good ; especially such ceremonies, as are, and have, for a long course of years, been made the subject of contention,

tention, and the means of preventing union, between professors of the same religion, and subjects of the same government; all (we will suppose) equally sincere in the profession of the one, and equally firm in the interest of the other.—Having no scruple ourselves to any ceremony enjoined by the Church of *England*, we plead for no abatement or alteration in this respect, upon our own account; nor does our design lead us to plead for it at this time, in the behalf of any others. All we would say is, that as ceremonies in themselves are not essential to religion, so neither are they necessary for its support; and yet some ceremonies may be very proper, when clearly founded upon reason, and pointed out as expedient by present circumstances. The two originally annexed to the Christian religion will always appear, to those, who will thoroughly consider, to have the strongest reasons at the bottom; and such reasons, as will always stand good. Others may undoubtedly be altered, as occasions shall require, and opportunities admit.

We now go on to set our allegations before our Readers, placing them, as well as we can, in a proper order, and for the most part without comment or addition (unless where either shall seem necessary or proper;) because we would leave every reader to examine and judge for himself. And he may with the utmost freedom judge either for or against us, according to what shall appear to him to be just, upon considering the evidences.

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S E C T.

S E C T: I.

Translation of the Bible.—To the references under this head may be added, Dr. Grey's essay on *the last words of David*, published 1749. Which, it is to be hoped may, be followed in due time by many other excellent pieces of this kind; particularly those, which the same incomparable person has partly promised to the Public.

S E C T. II.

Concerning our Liturgy in general, and the improvements, that may be made in some other parts of our ecclesiastical constitution. The judgment and proposals of several learned Men, in one view, relating to this subject.

I. Lord BACON, in his address (a) to King James.

— 'None (as I suppose) of sound judgment, will derogate from the Liturgy, if the form thereof be in all parts agreeable to the Word of God, the example of the primitive Church, and that holy decency, which St. Paul commendeth.—For the particular exceptions to the Liturgy as it now stands, I think divers of them, allowing they were just, yet seem not to be of weight, otherwise than that nothing ought to be accounted light in matters of religion and piety.' Then he proceeds to give his own judgment in divers particulars, that he thought might deserve to be considered; together with his reasons on each head, which, tho' good ones, we

(a) *Considerations touching the better pacification and edification of the Church of England.*

must omit.—‘ That the word *Priest* should not be continued, especially with offence, the word *Minister* being already made familiar.—Touching the *absolution*, it is not unworthy of consideration, whether it may not be thought unproper and unnecessary, &c. For *confirmation*,—whereas, in the primitive Church, children were examined of their Faith before they were admitted to the communion, time may seem to have turned it, to refer as if it had been to receive a confirmation of their baptism.—For the celebrating of *matrimony*; the ring seemeth to many, even of vulgar sense and understanding, a ceremony not grave enough, especially to be made (as the words make it) the essential part of the action. Besides, some other of the words are noted in speech, not to be so decent and fit.—For *musick in churches*, that there should be singing of psalms and spiritual songs, is not denied, &c. [N. B. He allows, upon the whole, of Church-musick, as *decent and tending to edification*; only making a difference *between the wisdom of the institution, and the excess of the late times.*] But then the curiosity of division and reports, and other figures of musick (β), have no affinity with the reasonable service of God, but were added in the more pompous times.—For the *cap and surplice*—[but it is needless to give his Lordship’s sentiments on these; there being no dispute now about the former, since men have been left more to their reasonable liberty, at least by connivance; and there being as little about the latter, between men of reason and candor.] And for the *subscription*, it seemeth to be in the nature of a confession, and therefore more proper to

(β) The thirty-two Commissioners, who compiled the *Reformation of our ecclesiastical laws*, were exactly of the same sentiments, and seemed desirous to lay aside all operose, and (what was called) *figured music*; in the worship of God. *Tit. de div. offic. c. 5.*

bind in the unity of *faith*, and to be urged rather for articles of doctrine, than for *rites and ceremonies and points of outward government*. For howsoever politic considerations and reasons of State may require *uniformity*, yet Christian and divine grounds look chiefly upon *unity*.'

There are many more very useful proposals in that address, all tending to the peace and honor of this Church; some of which may occasionally be taken notice of, or, at least, referred to hereafter.

2. King JAMES I. soon after his receiving the address before-mentioned (or much about that time) made several wise regulations in Council, for the benefit of this Church. Among which were the following, being such, as have not yet sufficiently taken effect.

‘ Ordered, Jan. 18. 1603-4.—That there may be as few *pluralities* as possible; and that the livings be near each other. [Many obstacles have hitherto hindred the good design of this order. The Legislature may in time remove them, to the satisfaction of all, without detriment to any.]—That there be but one *uniform translation of the Bible*, to be used in all churches. [This yet wanted, so long as our two translations of the *psalms* are not uniform.—To say, that one only is *used in all churches*, is not sufficient to satisfy reasonable minds.]—That the *articles of religion* be *explained and enlarged*. [Which hath been often wished by some of the wisest men.]—That a more *learned Ministry*, and *proper maintenance*, be provided in such places of *England* where there is want. [Which want is oftentimes still too great, not only in *England*, but in *Ireland* and *Wales*, and several other places.]—Care to inhibit popish and pestilent books. [Popery still pre-

prevails, partly by the spreading of books, and partly by other means.] See *Collier's eccl. Hist.* vol. 2. append. N^o 100.

3. Extracts from the *Proceedings of the Bishops* (γ) and other Divines at *Westminster*, in 1641.

Before they come to the Liturgy, they premise some things; amongst others the following Query, *viz.* Whether in the 20th article these words are not inserted [meaning by way of interpolation; namely] *Habet ecclesia auctoritatem in controversiis fidei*.—They seem to think ‘that the *absolution*, which the Priest pronounceth, is no more than declaratory; and look upon it as innovation, that any part of the morning-prayer is read at the holy table, when there is no communion.’ With some other things of this kind, which may be passed by for the present.

Among their *considerations* on the book of Common-prayer, they have the following Queries and Remarks.

—8. ‘Whether, according to that end of the preface before the Common-prayer, the Curate should be bound to read morning and evening prayers *every day* in the Church, if he be at home, and not reasonably letted; and why not only on *Wednesday* and *Friday* morning, and in the afternoon on *Saturdays*, with holy day eves?—9. Whether the rubric should not be amended, as, particularly,

(γ) Archbishop *Usher*, Bishop *Williams*, Dr. *Prideaux*, Dr. *Ward*, Dr. *Brownrig*, Dr. *Featly*, Dr. *Hacket*. There had been the year before a Committee, consisting of 10 Bishops and 10 Earls, to treat about matters of religion, that required redress. Their articles also are extant, and one part of their business was to re-examine the Common-prayer.

where it is said, that the *lessons* should be *sung in a plain tune*, why not *read in a distinct voice*? [The rubric here referred to has been since altered; and we allow this query a place here, only upon the account of some similar rubrics still retained, and not unjustly objected to.]—10. In the prayer for the Clergy, that phrase, *Which only worketh great marvels*, perhaps to be altered. [This has been taken notice of before.]—12. The rubric to be cleared, how far a Minister is to repulse a scandalous and notorious sinner from the *communion*.—22. Whether in the last rubric of confirmation, those words be to be left out, *and be undoubtedly saved*?—23. Whether the *catechism* may not receive a little more enlargement?—24. Whether the times prohibited for *marriage*, are [not] quite to be taken away? [Which query we the rather re-exhibit here, as it gives us an opportunity to introduce that complaint of Archbishop *Whitgift* to Queen *Elizabeth*, which has fallen in our way since, relating to a bill for reforming certain articles in our establishment, which had passed the House of Commons, in the year 1584. His words, as recited by *Fuller*, in his Ch. hist. are these. “ They have also passed a bill, giving liberty to marry at all times of the year, without restraint, contrary to the old canons continually observed amongst us; and containing matter, which tendeth to the slander of this Church, as having hitherto maintained an error.”]—26. Whether these words in matrimony, *With my body I thee worship*, shall not be thus altered, *I give thee power over my body*?—28. In the absolution of the sick, were it not plain to say, *I pronounce thee absolved*?—29. The psalm of thanksgiving of women after *child-birth*, were it not fit to be composed out of proper verses taken from divers psalms? [The psalm ’till then used, was the 121st. Nor are those now appointed, supposed to be so proper

per and pertinent, as certain select *versicles*, as here proposed, would be.]—32. In the order of the burial of all persons, 'tis said, *We commit his body to the ground, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life*: Why not thus, *knowing assuredly, that the dead shall rise again*? [By the way, this seems rather too flat, and not answerable to the design of the office; which, without question, the Church intended only for those, *that depart hence in the Lord*.]—34. In the *Litany*, instead of *fornication, and all other deadly sin*, would it not satisfy thus? *from fornication, and all other grievous sinne*? —35. It is very fit, that the imperfections of the metre in the *singing-psalms* should be mended, and then lawful authority (δ) added unto them, to have them publicly sung before and after sermons, and sometimes instead of the hymns of morning and evening prayer.'

We have passed over several other articles, as not being so directly to our purpose. Yet we may observe further, that they intimated, that the *calendar* wanted reforming; that the *psalms* ought to be

(δ) *Collier* observes, that *Sternhold's* translation stands upon no authority, either from the Crown or Convocation; being only connived at, rather than approved. *Cb Hist.* vol. II. p. 326. If so, may not any other (especially any better) translation be used, with as much freedom, and upon as good ground, as we use that bad one? At least, is it not more warrantable, as well as more rational and profitable to a congregation, to use that of *Brady* and *Tate*? which, we all know, stands upon royal authority, and is also a more beautiful, intelligible, and affecting version. And since we have no act of Parliament for the use of any version at all, or even for any singing in our churches (excepting those prosaic parts of the service, which the rubric allows to be sung) it may not be an improper query, whether there be not a defect here? However, Mr. *Collier* above cited, (with Dr. *Heylin*, and some others) seems to be against the use of psalmody in churches, and speaks rather too slightly of it.

read in the new translation ; and that the *Gloria Patri* does not seem so necessary to be rehearsed at the end of each. To which we may add, that they took occasional notice of some blunders in the *printing* of the *Common Prayer* ; giving this instance, which we omitted on a foregoing occasion ; viz. ‘ In the collect next unto the collect against the pestilence, the clause perhaps to be mended, *For the honour of Jesus Christ’s sake.*’

4. Bishop SANDERSON (ε). ‘ The Church of England, both in the preface to the book of *Common-prayer*, and in the *articles* of her confession, and in sundry passages in the *homilies*, occasionally, hath in as plain and exprefs terms, as can be desired, declared to the world, that any of her orders and constitutions may be retained, abolished, or altered from time to time, and at all times, as the Governors for the time being shall judge to serve best unto edification.” Accordingly, in those days of confusion, wherein he delivered his thoughts upon this subject, he wished, that several regulations might be made, to bring the Church and the Nation into better order ; and that to this end *an humble supplication* might be presented to those, that had in their hands the ordering of the great affairs of Church and State, that they would in their goodness and wisdoms make some speedy and effectual provision in divers respects, as the occasion of the times required ; and particularly with regard to *preaching*, which was then greatly abused, men uttering (as he observed) *what they list*, and indeed what was highly improper, and even prejudicial to Society. And with regard to *order* and *discipline*, so extremely wanted both then and since, he farther expresseth his wish, *that the ecclesiastical government might be timely settled*

(ε) Visitation-sermon at *Grantham*, 1641.

in some such moderate and effectual way, as that it might not be either too much abused by them that were to exercise it ; nor too much despised by those that must live under it. Otherwise he apprehended, that very bad consequences might follow, for want of proper regulations made *in time* : Which accordingly came to pass, almost to the ruin of the Nation. Indeed when the Nation began to be settled again upon its ancient establishment, and a *review* was under consideration, it was observed, that this good man (then grown old) discovered too much of that common infirmity of age, peevishness ; and was but little pleased with the proposals of amendment, that were made at the conference. Perhaps some, or many of them, might appear to him to be unreasonable ; or to be urged in an improper manner ; or his temper, naturally a good one, might have been impaired by his late sufferings. However, it is certain, as well from his own declarations, as from those of others, that he was by no means against, but for amendments, provided they were proper ones, and regularly made. Thus we are told of him by one, who was intimately acquainted with him. ‘ As to our ‘ *Reformation*, he had a great esteem for the mode- ‘ ration of it, a great veneration for the instruments ‘ employed by God in it, and a great love of that ‘ wholesome way of doctrine, life, devotion and ‘ government then composed ; not that he was such ‘ a formalist, but that he wished an alteration in ‘ some words, phrases, and method and order, to ‘ which change of times, or language, or the like, ‘ might invite ; tho’ he judged all alterations, in ‘ such grand and establish’d concerns of religion, ‘ should be done by the public spirit, counsel and ‘ consent of the Prophets, Prince, and People.— ‘ As to *conformity*, no man had a more tender ‘ heart to pity and pray for those, who, out of scruple or tenderness of conscience, were less satisfied ‘ with

' with some things ; nor a gentler or more power-
 ' ful way to win or persuade those, that were capa-
 ' ble, ingenuous and honest. And he would say
 ' with Bishop *Brownrig*, that *nothing was less*
 ' *to be stickled for, or against, than ceremonies* ; yet
 ' he was for obedience to governors, even in
 ' these.—As to *Church-government*, he was passio-
 ' nately inclined to any fair and fraternal accommo-
 ' dation ; to the intent that humble, orderly, and
 ' worthy Ministers might have all their due [allud-
 ' ing to *discipline*, as we saw before,] and Bishops
 ' no more than was theirs, by Scripture, primitive
 ' customs, the laws of the land, and by principles
 ' of order and true government among all societies
 ' of men.—And it was thought, that if [he had
 ' been promoted to the Prelacy before the wars be-
 ' gun, and] his excellent temper had *sooner* been
 ' added as an allay to some other mens hotter spirits,
 ' possibly we had not seen things run to that disor-
 ' der and ruin, *to which they afterwards did*.—Finally,
 ' with regard to *Church-censures*, they were by him
 ' seriously and solemnly used, with great reverence,
 ' and on great occasions, that they might be re-
 ' stored to the primitive esteem and veneration.'
Special remarks on the life of Bishop Sanderson, 1663.

5. Dr. HAMMOND. ' The restoring Episco-
 ' pacy to its due burthen, as well as reputation, were
 ' a care worthy of reformers ; and it is so far from
 ' my desire, that any such care should be spared,
 ' that it is now my public solemn petition both to
 ' God and man, that the *power of the keys*, and the
 ' exercise of that power ; the due use of *confirma-*
 ' *tion* (ζ), and (previous to that) examination and
 trial

(ζ) Dr. *Heylin*, in his introduction to Archbishop *Laud's* life,
 delivers it as his judgment, that if Suffragan Bishops had been
 appointed, and confirmation duly administred (after careful pre-
 paration,

trial of youth ; a strict search into the manners and tempers, and sufficiencies of those, that are to be admitted into holy *Orders*, and to be licenciate for public Preachers ; the *visitation* of each *Parish* in each diocese, and the exercise of Church-discipline upon all offenders ; together with painful, mature, and sober *preaching* and *catechising* ; *studies* of all kinds, and parts of theological learning, languages, &c. be so far taken into consideration by our Law-makers, and so far considered in the collating of Church-preferments and dignities ; so much of *duty* required of Clergymen, and so little left arbitrary and at large ; that every Church-preferment in this Kingdom may have such a due *burthen* annex to it, that no *ignorant* person should be able, no *lazy* or *luxurious* person willing or forward, to undergo it. And if this might be thus designed, I should then resolve,—that the settling and continuing of this present government [in the Church] would prove the *common interest* of all, and only the *burthen* of those few, that have those painful offices assigned them.’ *Considerations concerning Church-government*, (1644).

6. Bishop GAUDEN. ‘ The serious and speedy *review* of the *English* Liturgy (much desired by some, and not much opposed by others, that are learned and sober men, &c.) as it can be of no more inconvenience than a new translation of the Bible was, if it be to the better ; so I hope it may be of good use for the explaining of some words and

paration, &c.) in the times before our civil wars, Episcopacy would have been more favored, and would probably have stood its ground. Dr. Brett’s chapter of *Suffragan Bishops*, in his treatise of *Church-government*, may well deserve to be considered ; wherein he seems to make it but too evident, that such Suffragans are absolutely necessary, especially in large dioceses ; and more particularly upon the account of confirmations.

phrases

phrases in it, which are now much antiquated, obscure, and out of vulgar understanding; which is no news after an hundred years, in which language, as well as all things under heaven, suffer some change. Also it may serve for the quickning and improving of some passages, which seem less devotional and emphatic than they may easily be made: Also for the supplying of some things in point of daily praise and thanksgiving to God; which duty seems less full and explicit in the Liturgy; for the frequent doxology of Glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as it is ancient, very excellent, and angelical, so it might well bear some larger expressions of praise and thanks to God, whereby to set forth the grounds, causes, and just sense we have to give all glory, praises, and thanks to the eternal God, and the ever-blessed Trinity, for his infinite and undeserved mercies daily bestowed upon such unworthy sinners, for this life and a better.

This work once well and wisely done, as it may, by God's blessing, much tend to the satisfaction of all sober Christians, so it will not be any thing to the reproach of our Church, and of the Liturgy in the former plainer ways of worship, as either defective or incomplete for the main, &c. but very sober, good, and sufficient as to necessary; only as one day teacheth another, so there may be (as in all outward forms of divine worship) both harmless *additions*, and innocent *variations*, yea, and sometimes inoffensive *defalcations* of some redundancies, according as men, and times, and words, and manners, and customs may vary. Therefore, in lesser things I can humbly and chearfully consent to such pious, prudent, and improving alterations of the Liturgy,' &c. *Considerations touching the Liturgy*, 1661. p. 22, &c.

7. *Proposals for amendments and improvements*, made in 1668, by the Lord-Keeper BRIDGMAN, Lord Chief Justice HALE, Bishop WILKINS, Dr. BURTON, &c.

‘ That the *Liturgy* may be altered, by using the *reading psalms* in the new translation. By appointing some other *lessons* out of the canonical Scripture, instead of those taken out of the *apocrypha*. By not enjoining *godfathers* and *godmothers*, when either of the parents are ready to answer for the child. By omitting that clause in the prayer at baptism, *by spiritual regeneration*. By changing that question, *Wilt thou be baptized?* into, *Wilt thou have this child baptized?* By omitting those words in the thanksgiving after public and private baptism, *to regenerate this infant by thy holy spirit, and to receive him for thy child by adoption*: And the first rubric after baptism, *It is certain by God’s word, &c.* By changing those words in the exhortation after baptism, *regenerate and grafted into the body*, into, *received into the Church of Christ*. By not requiring reiteration of any part of the service about baptism in public, when it is evident, that the child hath been lawfully baptized in private. By omitting that clause in the collect after imposition of hands in confirmation, *after the example of thy holy Apostles, and to certify them by this sign, of thy favour, and gracious goodness towards them*. And by changing that other passage in the prayer before confirmation, *who hast vouchsafed to regenerate, &c.* into, *who hast vouchsafed to receive these thy servants into thy Church by baptism*. By omitting that clause in the office of matrimony, *with my body I thee worship*: And that in the collect, *who hast consecrated, &c.* By allowing Ministers some liberty in the *visitation of the sick*, to use such other prayers, as they shall judge

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expedient. By changing that clause in the prayer at burial, *Forasmuch as it hath pleased almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself, &c.* into, *Forasmuch as it hath pleased almighty God to take out of this world the soul, &c.* - And in that clause, *in sure and certain hope, &c.* into, *in a full assurance of the resurrection by our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* By omitting that clause, *We give thee hearty thanks for that it hath pleased thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world:* And that other, *as our hope is this our brother doth.* By changing that clause in the communion service, *our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, &c.* into, *our sinful souls and bodies may be cleansed by his precious body and blood.* By not injoining the reading of the *commination*.

That the Liturgy may be *abbreviated*, as to the length of it, especially as to morning-service, by omitting all the responsal prayers, from *O Lord open thou our, &c.* to the Litany: And the Litany [itself, meaning, we suppose, on *Sundays* (n)] and all the prayers from, *Son of God, we beseech thee, &c.* to, *We humbly beseech thee, O Father, &c.* By not enjoining the use of the *Lord's-prayer* above once, viz. immediately after the absolution, except after the Minister's prayer before sermon. By using the *Gloria Patri* only once, viz. after the reading-psalms. By omitting the *Venite exultemus*, unless it be thought fit to put any, or all of the first seven [verses] among the sentences at the beginning. By omitting the *communion-service* at such times as are not communion-days; excepting the ten commandments, which may be read after the *creed*: And enjoining the prayer, *Lord have mercy upon us, and in-*

(n) Unless the true reading be, *And in the Litany, all the prayers from, Son of God, &c.*

cline our hearts to keep these laws, only once at the end. By omitting the collects, epistles and gospels, except only on particular Holidays. By inserting the prayer for the Parliament into the Litany, immediately after the prayer [or petition] for the royal Family, in this or the like form : That it may please thee to direct and prosper all the consultations of the high Court of Parliament, to the advancement of thy glory, the good of thy Church, the safety honor and welfare of our Sovereign and his kingdoms. By omitting the two hymns in the consecration of Bishops, and the ordination of Priests. That after the first question in the catechism, What is your name ? this may follow, When was this name given you ? And after that, What was promised for you in baptism ? Answer ; Three things were promised for me, &c. In the question before the commandments, it may be altered, You said it was promised for you, &c. To the fourteenth question, How many sacraments hath Christ ordained ? the answer may be, Two only, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.' Calamy's Abridgment, ch. 12. sub ann. 1668. In ch. 8. p. 159. this writer observes from the Conformists plea, [written by Mr. Pierce, a Clergyman] ' that Dr. Allen of Huntingdonshire, Clerk in the convocation of 1661, earnestly laboured with Dr. Sheldon then Bishop of London (afterwards Archbishop) that they might so reform the Liturgy [then under consideration,] as that no sober man might make exception : But was wished to forbear ; for that what should be, was concluded on, or resolved.'

8. Bishop CROFT. ' I humbly beseech the Governors of the Church calmly to consider, Were it not better to have such a *form of service*, as would satisfy the most ? The Fathers of our Church, when they reformed this nation from popery, were desirous to fetch off as many as they could ; retaining,
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for this cause, all the ceremonies and forms of prayer they could with a good conscience: And therefore they prescribed the form of second service to be said at the altar, as carrying some resemblance to the mass, then the people's delight; which being now become the people's hate, should for the same resemblance, according to the same rule of reason, be now taken away. We commend our forefathers for doing piously and wisely, and yet will not imitate them: They endeavored to please and gain the people; we will needs displease and lose them. Certainly we cannot do our forefathers a greater honor, than to observe their rule of reason, to conform to the times. And therefore they are grossly mistaken, who think it a dishonor to them, for us to take away what they have established, when we keep close to the *reason* wherefore they did establish it.—Some other things I could mention in the book of Common-prayer (tho' no way ill in themselves, yet) fit to be altered; and would obviously appear so to every wise man, were it resolved to compose such a form, as would take in most of this nation (θ); which I humbly conceive Governors should

(θ) The Bishop speaks of a strange set of men in his time, who would most passionately and irreligiously cry, ' We will not leave one ceremony, nor any one line of our Common-prayer; to gain thousands of idiot sectaries and mad fanatics: No, if you alter that, we will rather leave the Church, and go to the Papists mass.' Whereupon his Lordship makes this reflection, *If these be not as simple sectaries and mad fanatics as any whatsoever, let God and his holy Angels judge.—Certainly his religion is in vain, that would abandon the substance for want of the ceremonies. Surely a very ignorant mind, who hath not learnt, that obedience is better than sacrifice and whole burnt-offerings. And surely a very uncharitable mind, who would not leave ninety and nine unnecessary ceremonies, to bring one sinful strayed sheep into the congregation.—But as for you, my reverend Fathers of the Church, I hope you will consult with Scripture in this weighty affair, and model all according to the rules of meekness, charity, and compassionate tenderness; and endeavor with*
prudent

should in conscience endeavor, becoming all things to all men to gain some, tho' not all; yet happily gain all in process of time.' *Naked Truth* (1675) p. 23.

9. Bishop STILLINGFLEET. 'Because the *use of the Sacraments* in a Christian Church ought to be the most free from all exceptions, and they ought to be so administred, as rather to invite than discourage scrupulous persons from joining in them; I do think it would be a point of Christian wisdom and condescension in the Governors of our Church, to remove those bars to a freedom in joining in full communion with us: Which may be done, either by wholly taking away the *sign of the cross*; or, if that may give offence to others, by confining the

prudent admonitions to rectify the errors of these too zealous ceremonists, &c. p. 24.

If after this worthy Prelate's reflections, it may be thought pardonable in us to add a few of our own, they shall be these: That it will be no gain to our Church, to have any *mad fanatics* from without accede to it; nor any loss, if those equally mad within (supposing us to have any such, and keeping to the characters before given) should leave us: That as it is not desirable, so it is not probable, that the former sort will accede; (nor, by the way, should we ever court them; since they would but continue a disturbance, which the other had raised and left amongst us :) And that the latter, if they go over to popery, will neither add much strength nor much honor to its cause. But it may reasonably be hoped, that since the Revolution, and the present royal Family's accession (together with the increase of liberty, and of more generous sentiments, consequent upon both) the caprice and bigotry of all parties, called religious, have been considerably upon the decline; and that neither the dissenters nor ourselves have so great a number of furious zealots, as there were among both in Bishop *Croft's* time.—However, in this address, we are only pleading our own cause; that we may obtain what is for the honor and advantage of the Church itself, and for the just satisfaction and encouragement of all its rational members; herein regarding only matters of religion and conscience, and making *them* the sole motive of our application.

use of it to the public administration of baptism; [by the way, is it ever allowed to be used in private houses?] or by leaving it indifferent, as the parents [shall] desire it. As to *kneeling at the Lord's supper*, since some posture is necessary, and many devout people scruple any other, and the primitive Church did in ancient times receive it in the posture of adoration; there is no reason to take this away, even in parochial churches; provided that those, who scruple kneeling, do receive it with the least offence to others, and rather standing than sitting, because the former is most agreeable to the practice of antiquity, and of our neighbor reformed churches. As to the *surplice* in parochial churches, it is not of that consequence to bear a dispute one way or other. And as to cathedral Churches (¹), there is no necessity of alteration.—But there is another thing, that seems to be of late much scrupled in baptism, *viz.* the use of *godfathers* and *godmothers*, excluding the parents. Altho' I do not question but the practice of our church may be justified, &c. yet I see no necessity of adhering so strictly to the canon here, but that a little alteration may prevent these scruples, either by permitting the parents to join with the sponsors; or by the parents publicly desiring the sponsors to represent them in offering the child to baptism; or, which seems most agreeable to reason, that the parents offer the child to baptism, and then the sponsors perform the co-

(¹) In a bill agreed upon by a Committee of the House of Commons, Nov. 18, 1680, the third article ran in these words: '*The use of the surplice to be wholly taken away, except in the King's chapel, and cathedral churches.*' [By the way, one would wonder, why so decent, and to us seemingly so harmless an attire, should be prohibited in *other* churches and chapels; unless perhaps to save parish-charge, in some very poor places.] Several other articles of the bill were the same in substance with these proposals of Dr. *Stillingsfleet*.

venanting part, representing the child; and the charge after baptism be given in common to the parents and sponsors (*).

Again. About the book of *Common-prayer*, it ought to be considered, (1) Whether, for the Satisfaction of the scrupulous, some more *doubtful* and *obscure* passages may not be explained and amended? Whether the *new translation* of the *psalms* were not fitter to be used, at least in parochial churches? Whether the portions of canonical scripture, were not better put instead of *apocrypha-lesions*? Whether the *rubric* about *salvation of infants* might not be restored to its former place in the *office of confirmation*, and so the present exceptions against it removed? Whether those expressions, which suppose the exercise of *discipline*, in *burying the dead*, were not better left at *liberty* in our present case? Such a *review*, made by *wise* and *peaceable* men, not given to wrath and disputing, may be so far from being a dishonor to this Church, that it may add to the glory of it. (2) Upon such a review, Whether it be not great reason, that all persons, who officiate in the Church, be not only tied to a constant use of it [*viz.* of the book of *Common-prayer*] in all public offices, &c. but do declare at their first entrance upon a parochial charge [and should not all sorts of *curacies* be here included?] their *approbation* of the *use* of it, after their own reading of it. (3) Whether such a solemn *using* of the *Liturgy*, and *approbation* and *promise* of the *use* of it, may not be *sufficient*, instead of the late form of declaring their *assent and consent*, which hath been so much scrupled by our brethren?

(*) Mr. *Bingham* makes it very clear, that, in the primitive Church, parents were commonly sponsors for their own children; *Antiq. B. xi. ch. 8.*

— There are *other* things very desirable towards the happiness and flourishing of this Church; as the exercise of *discipline* in parochial churches, in a due subordination to the Bishop; the reforming the *ecclesiastical courts* as to *excommunication*, without prejudice to the excellent profession of the civil law; the building of more *churches* in great parishes, especially about the city of *London* [which most happily hath been done since, in great measure, tho' more seem to be still wanting;] the retrenching of *pluralities*; the strictness and solemnity of *ordinations*; the making a book of *canons*, suitable to this age, for the better regulating the conversations of the Clergy. Such things as these might facilitate our union, and make our Church, in spite of all its enemies, to become a praise in the whole earth.
Preface to the unreasonableness of separation: Which book was first published in 1681.—About two years after, a very considerate and candid person published his thoughts upon the same subject, and spoke exactly to the same purpose, touching upon most of the articles, that this other learned man had done: And that was,

10. Bishop WETENHALL. 'I do not conceive, that the alteration of an expression, or perhaps here and there, of a whole prayer, or two, by law; or the dispensing with some ceremony *in loco*, for the sake of some unsatisfied, but otherwise regular Christians (who are not supposed of the cathedral body) I say, I do not conceive such concessions or relaxations, as these, would break the harmony and beauty of our worship, or disturb the union and peace of our Church. I will therefore freely publish my thoughts to be, that whether we consider the nature of the thing itself, or with regard to the Apostle's rule, not to please ourselves, but every one of us to please
his

his neighbor for his good to edification: in either regard, I say, there are some *colleets*, and perhaps *rubrics* too, which, with all duty and submission, I humbly conceive might be altered for the better. And further, that in some seasons, and in some private places, where ceremonies want that augustness, which the advantage of public and great congregations gives them (and in which kind of assemblies they are chiefly requisite) if the obligation to a ceremony or two were taken off; the benefit, which might hence redound to the Church, would be very considerable, both in respect of profelytes, and strength thereby, as also perhaps in other points.

Then he goes on to specify the several particulars, which in his judgment might very well admit of proper alterations: *e. g.* He thought, that liberty should be granted for exchanging *apocryphal lessons* for canonical ones; that the *calendar* ought to be rectified; that we should be allowed the use of the most correct *translation of the psalms* in prose; and that we want a better *metrical version* (λ), &c.' *Protestant peace-maker*, or a *seasonable perswasive to all serious Christians to pursue charity, peace, and union*, &c. p. 118, 119, 120.—And again, more generally, on another occasion; 'He that shall say, that under our present settlement, all that is established is absolutely the best, and nothing can be amended, says more than our Church does, and has

(λ) In his treatise on the *duty of singing* (Dublin, 1678) p. 565, he says, *There is no English version extant, that I ever yet could see, which is not incomparably better than the present.* He adds, that King James the first's excellent version *has much better authority.* And we may subjoin, that Mr. G. Sandys's version, dedicated to King James, being more excellent than either, ought to be preferred to both, and consequently to have more authority.

a difficult proof lies on him. There is something, saith he, *which is yet to be wisht*; and it is sufficient to say, that what is established, is as well as for the time it could be.—People will not be persuaded, but that in these days they stand upon the shoulders of all, who have lived before them,' &c. *On prayer*, p. 201, 2.

In the same year (1682) a lay-gentleman, of the profession of the Law, occasionally touched upon this subject: *viz.*

11. Mr. HUNT. 'Can any man imagine, that any prejudice can accrue to the Church of *England*, if she did enlarge her communion, by making the conditions of it more easy? especially if this may be done without annulling any of her institutions; which the better instructed Christians will always, and the weak may in time, devoutly observe. Will it be any prejudice, that the number of her Bishops be increased, and that *Suffragans* be appointed or approved by the present Bishops, *in partem sollicitudinis*, as was enacted by the statute, 2 *Hen. VIH. c. 14*? Which law was repealed by 1, 2. *Philip and Mary*, and revived by 8 *Eliz. c. 1*. These *Suffragans* were not intended to participate of their Lordships honours or revenues.---As to the canons, that enjoin *ceremonies* (about whose lawfulness there hath been so much zeal mispent, and unwarrantable heat and contention raised) no good Bishop but would relax them [if the laws would allow] for the sake of peace, and preservation of the unity of the Church, to men peaceable, and otherwise obedient to her injunctions. *So dangerous is it* (as he reflects upon this occasion) *to make laws in matters of religion, which take the conduct of religion so much from the Guides of the Church*.---Why may not standing at the sacrament be tolerated

ed (tho' kneeling is the devoutest gesture, and to me the most agreeable) when it is a posture of prayer enjoined in the primitive Church, in their solemn meetings for divine worship, between the feasts of *Easter* and *Whitsontide*? Why may not the signing of the cross in *baptism*, for the sake of peace and unity, be dispensed with where desired, when the sacrament is intire without it? Why may not our public *Liturgy* be changed and altered (tho' it may be defended as it is, and, as it is, entertains the devotions of the best men) merely for this reason, because it is not liked in some parts of it by some men, yet truly devout? Besides, it is the wish of some excellent persons of the Church of *England*, that our public offices were *more*, and those we have not so *long*; and that the Church had a greater treasury of *prayers*, and by variety of forms for the same office, were enlarged in her spirit of prayer, and her public devotions heightned. Why may not the *rubrics* be altered, as general scruples shall arise, by the authority of the Church? This would not lessen her authority, but advance the esteem of her wisdom in the exercise of it, when she useth it for edification.—Her *governance* will by this means be preserved; especially if the relaxation, that shall be made, proceeds from her *ex mero motu*, and is not imposed upon her by any secular authority [meaning, perhaps, by the secular authority's undertaking to do what the Church would not, or else neglected to do.] Nay, she will become by this means more ample and venerable. What glories will then shine upon the heads of the Bishops! We shall all rise up and call them blessed. Their order will be recovered to the highest veneration, and it will never after be a question, whether the order of Bishops be apostolical. The Parliament will make all laws yield and comply to such happy, peaceable, and gracious intendments, &c.—Be-

sides, I know it is meditated and designed by many, and the best men, sent to Parliaments, to redeem in part that infamous sacrilege, that was committed in the times of *Henry VIII.* when rectories appropriate to religious Houses (which had by appropriation the cure of the parish) were alienated, &c. Whereby not only the Church was robbed [rather, it had been robbed long before by those very Houses,] but the people cheated of their tithes, which were theirs to give, tho' not to retain, as their *præmium*, or reward for the Priests ministrations; which are now often most slenderly, and sometimes scandalously performed.—And as to *first-fruits* and *tenths*, which were imposed and exacted by the Pope, upon pretence of being the œcomenical Pastor and High-priest of the Christian Church; a compensation may be given to the Crown for this [the Crown hath since most generously bestowed them upon the poorer Clergy;] and some way will be found for the augmentation of Vicarages, and the re-indowment of churches, that lost all in that unparallell'd sacrilege, committed by the unsatiable avarice of that haughty and luxurious Prince. These designs employ the care of a great number of our principal Gentlemen, to purge the sin and dishonor brought upon the Nation by that extraordinary King.—As to *opinions*, it is much better sure (says this Writer) to give place to an innocent opinion, when entertained by considerable numbers, tho' a mistake, than to keep up contention and strife. *Peace* in the Church is better than precise and nice orthodoxness; and *union* is to be preferred before unnecessary truth, which is of no more importance to our salvation, than one of *Euclid's* propositions, tho' to be sure not so certain, and of less use.---Finally, with regard to positive and alterable *institutions*, they may give place to the peace, security and preservation of religion itself, to whose service they were first framed

framed and designed.' *Postscript for rectifying some mistakes, &c.* p. 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 100, 104.

12. Dr. WHITBY. 'It is certain, that our Church hath already altered her Liturgy at several times and in several parts, *viz.* the *lessons, festivals, ceremonies, rubrics, collects, prayers*, the form of *administration of the sacraments, the catechism, confirmation, marriage, the visitation of the sick, the burial of the dead, and commination*; and that so much, that if our Rulers would be pleased to change the present Liturgy as much from what it is, as it is altered from what it was in the days of *Edward the sixth*, I verily believe that alteration would render it acceptable to many, who do now refuse submission to it: And why it may not now be altered for these great ends, as well as it was altered in the time of Queen *Elizabeth*, and [after] the return of our late (μ) Sovereign, I am not able to divine.'—And again, pressing the matter further in pursuit of another argument; 'The Church of Christ (saith he) hath judged it fit to alter many things, which were first instituted by the blessed (ν) Apostles [themselves,] or by the primitive age of the Church: And yet I hope this tempteth no man to suspect the wisdom of the Apostles of our Lord, or of the primitive professors of Christianity. Why therefore should a like practice tempt any to suspect the wisdom of our first Reformers?—It is certain [as was before observed] that we have already altered many things, which were allowed, done, and practised by our first Reformers: They at first, retained *chrisism, prayer for the dead, baptism by women*, and many other things of a like nature. And if these things might be reformed, without reflection on their wisdom; why

(μ) The word *late* seems to be a mistake for *present*.

(ν) The *kiss of charity*, and some other usages, were laid aside.

may not other things be so?" (ξ) *Protestant reconciler* (1683) p. 296. 333, 4.

13. *Proceedings of the ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1689.*——The determinations then settled were the following (each article, as soon as agreed on, being signed by the Bishop of London,) viz.

• That the *chaunting of divine service* in the cathedral churches shall be laid aside, that the whole may be rendered intelligible to the common people.

(ξ) It were well, if a discreet regard were had, to just exceptions, and reasonable demands; and all good endeavors used to give content, where it is wanted, even to private subjects. For even private subjects employ their thoughts, and can discern blemishes, though they cannot mend them. But Governors can. We see the sentiments and declarations of former times. *Brotherly charity willeth, that so much, as conveniently may be, offences should be taken away: Therefore we are willing, &c.* 2d Book King Edward VI. communion-office. But for that, in matter concerning the service of God, we were nice, or rather jealous, that the public form thereof should be free, not only from blame, but from suspicion; we have thought meet, with consent of the Bishops, and other learned men, that some small things might be rather explained than changed, &c. King James I's proclamation, ann. 1^o. Amongst other things (as Dr. Nichols observes) *lay-baptism* was laid aside. And L'Estrange tells us, that the sign of the cross at the healing was discarded, because found to encourage superstition; and yet the cure, it is said, operated as successfully afterwards, as it did before. At the last review, the Bishops sent word to the London Divines, *If any thing in the established Liturgy shall be made appear to be justly offensive to sober persons, we are not at all unwilling that the same should be changed.* And in their preface to the Liturgy, they say, that they willingly assented to such alterations, as seemed requisite or expedient, tho' not enforced so to do by any strength of argument convincing them of the necessity of making the said alterations.—Thus they shewed condescension: And we would not say, they made alterations without necessity, or where nothing required alteration, according to common sense.

That

That besides the *psalms* being read in their course as before, some proper and devout ones be selected for *Sundays*.

That the *apocryphal lessons*, and those of the Old Testament, which are too *natural*, be thrown out ; and others appointed in their stead by a new *calendar*, which is already fully settled, and out of which are omitted all the *legendary saints-days*, and others not directly referred to in the Service-book.

That (not to send the vulgar to search the canons, which few of them ever saw) a rubric be made, setting forth the usefulness of the *cross in baptism*, not as an essential part of that sacrament, but only a fit and decent ceremony. However, if any do, after all, in conscience scruple it, it may be omitted by the Priest.

That likewise if any refuse to receive the sacrament of the *Lord's supper kneeling*, it may be administered to them in their pews.

That a rubric be made, declaring the intention of the *Lent fast* to consist only in extraordinary acts of devotion, not in distinction of meats. And another to state the meaning of *Rogation-sundays* and *Ember-weeks* ; and appoint that those ordained within the *quatuor tempora*, do exercise strict devotion.

That the rubric, which obliges *Ministers* to read or hear Common-prayer publicly or privately every day, be changed to an exhortation to the *People* to frequent those prayers.

That

That the *absolution* in morning and evening prayer may be read by a Deacon; the word *Priest* in the rubric being changed into *Minister*, and those words, ' *and remission*,' be put out as not very intelligible.

That the *Gloria Patri* shall not be repeated at the end of every psalm, but of all, appointed for morning and evening prayer.

That those words in the *Te Deum*, 'Thine honorable true and only Son,' be thus turned, *Thine only-begotten Son*(o); *honorable* being only a civil term, and no-where used in *sacris*.

The *Benedicite* shall be changed into the 128th(π) psalm; and other psalms likewise appointed for the *Benedictus* and *Nunc dimittis*.

The *versicles* after the Lord's-prayer, &c. shall be read kneeling, to avoid the trouble and inconveniences of so often varying postures in the worship. And after these words, *Give peace in our time, O Lord*, shall follow an answer, promisory of somewhat on the people's part, [as] of keeping God's laws, or the like; the old response being grounded on the predestinating doctrine, taken in too strict an acceptation.

All high titles or appellations of the King, Queen, &c. shall be left out of the prayers; such as *Most*

(o) Is not this rather too *short* for a versicle?—Query, as to *Thy glorious*,—or *Thine adorable*—or *Thy ever-blessed*, and, &c.

(π) This must probably be a mistake, either for the 8th psalm, or rather for the 148th, which seems to be extremely proper, and far more suitable than the *Benedicite*.

illus-

illustrious, religious, mighty, &c. and only the word Sovereign retained for the King and Queen.

Those words in the prayer for the King, *Grant that he may vanquish and overcome all his enemies*, as of too large an extent, if the King engage in an unjust war, shall be turned, *Prosper all his righteous undertakings against thy enemies*, or after some such manner (p).

Those words in the prayer for the Clergy, *who alone workest great marvels*, as subject to be ill-interpreted by persons vainly disposed, shall be thus, *who alone art the author of all good gifts*: And those words, *the healthful spirit of thy grace*, shall be, *the holy spirit of thy grace*; *healthful* being an obsolete word.

The prayer, which begins, *O God whose nature and property*, shall be thrown out, as full of strange and impertinent expressions, and besides not in the ori-

(p) It hath been observed but too justly, "that it is no small inconvenience of our Liturgy at least, that the things, which, perhaps, were formerly proper enough, but upon an alteration of circumstances are found to be otherwise, cannot be altered without a grievous offence. This will be plain by giving an instance. The members of this Church in King James the second's time were displeased both with his religion and designs; and thinking themselves to be in great danger, they prayed heartily for the success of the Prince of Orange in private, but when they used the Liturgy in public, they pretended to pray, that God would strengthen King James, *that he might vanquish and overcome all his enemies*. And so in the Litany, they used these words: *That it may please thee to keep and strengthen, in the true worshipping of thee, in righteousness and holiness of life, thy servant James, our most gracious King and Governor. That it may please thee to be his defender and keeper, giving him the victory over all his enemies*," Dean Prideaux's observations (see his *Life*, published 1748) with those of several other judicious Writers, exactly concur with these.

ginal,

ginal, but foisted in since by another hand, [into the place where it now stands. See *Wheatly* in loc.]

The *colleets* for the most part are to be changed for those, which the Bishop of *Chichester* (c) has prepared; being a review of the old ones with enlargements, to render them more sensible and affecting; and what expressions are needful, so to be retrenched.

If any Minister refuse the *surplice*, the Bishop (if the people desire it, and the living will bear it) may substitute one in his place, that will officiate in it: But the whole thing is left to the discretion of the Bishops.

If any desire to have *godfathers* and *godmothers* admitted, and their children presented in their own names to *baptism*, it may be granted (τ).

About the *Atbanasian creed*, they came at last to this conclusion: That lest the wholly rejecting it should by unreasonable persons be imputed to them as Socinianism, a rubric shall be made, setting forth, or declaring the curses denounced therein, not to be restrained to every particular article, but intended a-

(c) Dr. *Patrick*.

(τ) Dr. *Nichols* seems to speak very candidly. *Denique spondeam—me minimè repugnaturum esse, si res aliquas indifferentes, nisi longā vetustate venerandas, vel è medio tolli, aut saltem pro arbitrio Pastoris usurpandas relinqui. Paci ego publicæ unicè consulo.* Def. eccl. c. 17. p. 349. And yet, p. 266, (speaking of sureties in baptism) he expresses himself in these words: *Sapientissima hæc majorum instituta piaculum habemus abrogare; verbaque antiquo ritu concepta* (alluding, we suppose, to the sponsions) *religiosè admodum retinemus, &c.* Wise men will easily judge how the matter stood. We say nothing further.

gainst those, that deny the substance of the Christian religion in general (v).

Whether the amendment of the *translation of the reading psalms* (as they are called) made by the Bishop of St. Asaph [Dr. Lloyd] and Dr. Kidder, or that in the Bible, shall be inserted in the Prayer-book, is wholly left to the Convocation to consider of and determine.

In the *Litany, Communion-service, &c.* are some alterations made, as also in the (φ) *canons.* Calamy's *abridgment*, ch. 17. *sub. an.* 1689.—If it should be thought fit to publish the *Proceedings* at large, from the authentic memoirs, it is possible we should see some errors in the foregoing account rectified, and all the parts of those proceedings cleared up to general satisfaction.

(v) The words in the new rubric were these: *The condemning clauses are to be understood as relating only to those, who obstinately deny the substance of the Christian faith. See Preservation against heresies, p. 55.*

(φ) The preamble to the King's commission relating to this matter was thus worded: *And whereas the book of canons is fit to be reviewed, and made more suitable to the state of the Church, &c. It may not be amiss here to give the rest of that preamble. Whereas the particular forms of divine worship, and the rites and ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things in their own nature indifferent and alterable, and so acknowledged; it is but reasonable, that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigencies of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein, as to those, that are in place and authority, should from time to time seem either necessary or expedient:—And whereas there are defects and abuses in the ecclesiastical courts and jurisdictions; and particularly there is not sufficient provision made for the removing of scandalous Ministers or People: And whereas it is most fit, that there should be a strict method prescribed for the examination of such persons as desire to be admitted into holy orders, both as to their learning and manners: We therefore, &c.*

Several

Several writings, drawn up by learned men of our Church, came out about this time, shewing the reasonableness and necessity of making proper alterations, and answering objections, &c. Amongst others, Dr. *Prideaux's* Letter to a Friend, relating to the present Convocation at *Westminster*.—*Discourse concerning the ecclesiastical Commission*.—*Vox populi*.—*Vox Regis & Regni*.—*Letter to a Member of Parliament*, &c. In this last piece, it was justly observed, ' That no alteration was intended, but ' in things declared to be alterable by the Church itself. And if things alterable be altered upon the ' grounds of prudence and charity ; and things defective be supplied ; and things abused be restored to their proper use ; and things of a more ordinary composition revised and improved ; whilst ' the doctrine, government, and worship of the ' Church remain intire, in all the substantial parts of ' them ; we have all reason to believe, that this will ' be so far from injuring the Church, that on the ' contrary it shall receive a great benefit by it.' p. 2. (x)—We would only remark further under this head, that whereas few, if any, of those learned men, who treated upon the subject at this time, thought fit to set their names to their writings ; those, who are concerned in the present application, will,

(x) Dr. *Beveridge*, in his sermons before this Convocation, 1689, tho' not concurring in the proposals of alterations, acknowledged, that ' nothing was [anciently] more usual with all ' the Churches of God, than when times and necessity required ' it, to *change* the laws made by themselves, to abrogate old ' ones, and substitute others and perhaps different ones in their ' stead. This cannot be unknown to any one, who is versed in ' ecclesiastical history.' Nor is it unknown to those, who are versed in our own, why several great men of the Church thought fit to oppose the alterations, that were so calmly and so honorably proposed at this time. See *Prideaux's* Life, and other late histories and accounts, relating to these affairs and times.

it is hoped, be judged to be the more excusable, in that they have chosen to follow the example of men of such prudence and experience; whose writings relating to an affair of such importance, they cannot but wish were *re-published* at this time. Which done, would amply justify the present undertaking to those, who may not think its own reasonableness and inoffensiveness sufficient to justify it.

14. MR. DAWSON. 'As to *obsolete expressions, apocryphal lessons, and a bad version of the psalms* used in our divine service; 'tis plain enough, from the nature of the thing, that all obsolete words ought to be laid aside, and others more modern put in the room of them: For obsolete words are such, as are out of use, and whose meaning is not commonly known; and if this be not amended, we shall be guilty of what we accuse the Papists of, viz. of *praying in an unknown tongue*. *Apocryphal lessons* indeed are not so proper as those of canonical Scripture; yet many in the books of *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticus* contain canonical truth; and by which the people may edify more, than by many chapters of some historical books, which have been always accounted canonical. The *version of the psalms* will not be found so bad as some think it, whenever they go about to make a new one, &c. But indeed it is to be wished there was an essay made for a better version.—Upon the whole matter, I am not of the mind of those (if any such there be) who think our *Liturgy* so compleat and perfect, as that it cannot in any thing be corrected and amended. [Only he would have no change made without necessity.] *Origin of laws* (1694) B. VI. ch. 9.

15. In the year 1710, there appeared a very honest and modest performance, without a name (but done by a serious and worthy Member of this
T Church)

Church) addressing the two Houses of Parliament, with the Bishops and Clergy in Convocation, for a review, in several propositions, that appear to be very reasonable; amongst which, this was one: ' Prop. 5. *That a certain number of Divines, &c. be authorized by Commission to review the book of Common-prayer and administration of the sacraments; and to make such alterations therein, as may clear the sense where doubtful, and give satisfaction to tender consciences.*——There are some things in the Liturgy, for the amendment of which many pious and sober men wish.——It must be confessed, that frequent and unnecessary alterations in the public forms of worship are neither desirable nor expedient, and tend very much to make men's minds unsettled and wavering; but yet it doth not follow, that all alterations are unreasonable or unlawful. In some cases it is unreasonable to deny them: For sometimes there is a necessity for them. Words frequently change their signification, and men their customs: Many things, that have long lain in obscurity, are at last discovered. And as it is in this respect with other things, so also is it with many lesser truths. We, who stand as it were upon the shoulders of our forefathers, do see farther than they could. These things frequently render it necessary to alter many things in the public offices of the Church, as often as either words change their signification, or men their customs; as often as, by the increase of knowledge, those truths, which have hitherto lain long hid in obscurity, are better and more clearly understood by men of learning and piety. As therefore (they are the words of a great man, but a little transposed) all men ought on the one hand to avoid the imputation of a desultory levity, as tho' they loved changes for change sake; so on the other hand we must avoid a sullen adhering to things, because they were once settled, as if points of honor

honor were to be maintained here; and [as if we thought] that it looked like the reproaching of a constitution, or the wisdom of former ages (↓), to alter what They did: Since it is certain, that what was wisely ordered at one time, may be as wisely changed in another. There have been several alterations made already in the public service of the Church since the Reformation: and why therefore may it not be lawful to alter a few things now? Is there nothing in it fit to be considered? Are there no expressions in it doubtful, the sense whereof it is fit should be cleared up? Many things might be offered out of the Liturgy as worthy of consideration, because they are now made the subject of debate; but we would not presume to dictate to our Superiors, and therefore refer ourselves to them to consider and determine what is fit to be altered in it.' *Essay towards a comprehension, or a persuasive to unity amongst Protestants*, p. 91, 2, 3, and 68.

16. Bishop KENNET. 'Let us hope and pray, that whatever addition can be made to our happiness, God in his time will add those things unto us. In the churches of *Corinth* and *Crete*, planted by an Apostle, there were some things wanting to be afterward *set in order* (ω): And where is perfection but in the *Church of the first-born in heaven*? May we not wish for some little *suppletory offices* to our excellent Liturgy; especially for admitting converts, and reconciling penitents, to our faith and communion? May we not desire a reformation of the *ecclesiastical laws*, in some such method, as the wisdom

(↓) On the other hand, it is rightly enough observed, that those, who are not over-sanguine, see and lament the consequences of long neglecting to review establishments, and suffering the public wisdom of past ages to serve here, and here only, for all following ones. Archdeacon Law's considerations, p. 240.

(ω) 1 Cor. xi. 34.

of the Legislature more than once directed? [meaning Stat. 28 Hen. VIII. c. 15. and 35. c. 16. and 3. 4. Ed. VI. &c.] And may we not desire, that the *admission of Clerks* to the cure of souls, were left somewhat more to the conscience of the Bishop (a)? And that *suspension* and *deprivation*, in notorious causes, might have their due process and effect, without the multiplicity of prohibitions and appeals? That the *censures* and *absolutions* of the Church may be restored to the cognisance of the Bishop; that *penance* with the *commutations* of it, may be under his direction; and that in some cases *contumacy* might be punished, without the last resort to *excommunication*? That the power of suppressing vice and immorality could regain its proper seat, the *discipline* of the Church; and so encourage the worthy endeavors for a *reformation of manners*? That the *repairing* of *churches* and *chapels* might be more effectually enjoined by the Ordinary, without vexatious interruption? That the *exemption* of some places from episcopal jurisdiction, might be thought fit to be reformed, as well as communicating some episcopal rights to inferior Prelates [Q. about his meaning here;] both which were the inventions of *popery*, and must appear to be the remains of it, &c. That to make the knowledge of a large diocese more easy, *Rural Deans* (β) were appointed, and well employed in the respective deaneries, as our primitive constitution did require, and as our reformation did in-

(a) There is an old statute (which has here escaped the notice of this inquisitive antiquary) that seems to come up fully to the purpose in the present case, and may therefore be worth having recourse to, viz. 9 Ed. II. c. 13. wherein the examination, determination, &c. is left wholly to the *spiritual Judge*.

(β) Many excellent persons of our Church, both formerly and more lately, have earnestly wished and declared for the restoration of this useful office; as well as that of *Suffragan Bishops*; as may perhaps be particularly shewn upon some future occasion.

tend.

tend. That *Archdeacons* may be more effectually made the eyes and watchmen of the Bishop; may be called in to examine and to present fit persons to be ordained; and may give account of their visitations to the Bishop, the Bishop to the Metropolitan, and he to the supreme Governor; as was once a commendable practice. In short, if some of these or better regulations were made, beginning, suppose, in ecclesiastical Synods with unity and peace, and ratified with full and sufficient authority of the civil Powers; it would be a great honor to our holy religion, and an additional strength and beauty to the whole frame of our constitution in Church and State.' *Sermon at the consecration of Bishop Wake, 1705. published, as the title-page intimates, at the Desire of the Archbishop and Bishops.* From whence it appears, that the foregoing memorials and representations were by no means disagreeable to the Prelates of those times: Nor can the like, we presume, be now to their worthy Successors.

17. Mr. NEEDHAM. 'I will freely own that our *discipline* is defective, our *canons* not so well chosen, nor our *Liturgy* so perfect, as it ought to be.' *Visitation-sermon at Petersfield, 1709, p. 14. published at the request of the Clergy.*

18. Bishop WAKE.—'And now, my Lords, let any impartial person consider, what there was in such a design [*viz.* that of the *ecclesiastical Commission* before-mentioned] that could be justly esteemed prejudicial to the constitution of our Church? Wherein would our *canons* have suffered, if those already made had been more strongly enforced; and some *new* ones had been added, for the reformation of manners; for the better punishing of notorious offenders; and to render our *public discipline* more strict and severe? This we have been

wishing for, ever since the Reformation. What harm would it have done our Church, had it now been effected? Or how would our excellent *Liturgy* have been the worse, if a few more *doubtful expressions* had been changed for plainer and clearer; and a passage or two, which however capable of a just *defence*, yet in many cases seem harsh to some even of our own communion, had either been wholly *left at liberty* (γ) in such cases, to be *omitted* altogether;

(γ) *Left at liberty*] We humbly beg, that this proposal, so frequently occurring in some or other of the foregoing extracts, may be particularly taken notice of. Because, having been made by so many men of eminence, and of the best judgment; our presuming to make it after them (as we have done in the 12th *section*) will at least be deemed the more excusable; and the objections against it, if any such shall be made, will probably, upon this account, appear to be of less force. To the reasonings we have formerly urged upon this head, we may take the liberty to add one more. *Necessity*, we usually say, *has no law*. And when real necessity presses, unnecessary restraints should be taken off, and reasonable liberty indulged. King Edward VI. by the advice of his privy Council, and at the request of his Bishops, allowed a latitude in several cases, where just occasions demanded. And in Parliament also he consented to the favoring of exigencies; as may be seen by his proclamation before the *order of communion*, 1547, which briefly touches upon an act passed by him a little before, enjoining and tolerating as follows: *That the most blessed sacrament, &c. should be delivered under both kinds, that is to say, of bread and wine, EXCEPT NECESSITY OTHERWISE REQUIRE.* *Necessity* then appeared to be a sufficient reason for liberty, on occasions, that were exigent. Now we must beg leave to point out again an occasion, that sometimes, and not unfrequently, (especially in populous places) is *really* such. What shall be thought of the *office of burial*?—We address the supreme Being in the most solemn manner!—We apply every part of the office to *all*.—The objection was never yet answered; nor can, whilst the words of the office are so strong, and its design so clear.—We would never seek for solutions and evasions in an affair of such importance, and where the evidence is so cogent against us. Better deal freely and ingenuously, and own, that our Reformers design was defeated. Which is the very truth of the case. Otherwise we blind ourselves, and hinder a reformation. For we plead in the behalf of what we see requires it, and where we could wish it was granted.

or been so qualified, as to remove all exception against them in any case. If such *collects*, as are not yet adapted to the *festivals*, or *gospels*, to which they belong, had been made more full and apposite to both: If some of the *occasional offices* had been enlarged; and *new ones* added: If, for example, there had been a greater variety of *prayers*, *psalms*, and *lessons* appointed by authority, instead of the compositions of private persons, now necessarily to be used, for the *visitation of the sick*; and *new forms* composed for the use of *prisoners* for debt or crimes; for the greater solemnity of receiving *profelytes* into our Church; of reconciling *penitents* to it; and of casting *notorious offenders* out of it. These were some of the main things, that were then designed.' *Speech in the House of Lords, at the trial of Dr. Sacheverel, 1709-10.*

19. Bishop BURNET. His judgment and declarations are so well known, from almost all his writings, that it will be needless here to produce them; and they are so many and so forcible, that it may on some accounts be more prudent to forbear. However, let his last words, which are very gentle, but at the same time very moving ones, be heard and regarded.——' I may hope, that what I am now to offer to succeeding ages, may be better heard, and less censured, than any thing I could offer to the present. So that this is a sort of testament, or dying speech, which I leave behind me, to be read and considered when I can speak no more.'—— Then he goes on to speak of the *concerns of the Church and Religion*; particularly, of what he calls the *imposition of requiring subscriptions*; of the need and benefit of reforming our *worship*; of the administration of *ecclesiastical jurisdiction*, which he says had been the burden of his life; of the reformation of our *ecclesiastical laws*; of *Lay chancellors* and

other officers ; of correcting the manners of the *Laitie*, and inspecting into the lives and labors of the *Clergy* ; of relieving the distressed case of the *poor Clergy* ; of *rural Deans* ; of *suspension* and *ex-communication*, &c. All which, he says, would bring our Church indeed into a primitive form ; adding, that at present the Clergy have less authority, and are under more contempt in it, than in any Church he had seen. ‘ *We are in a woful condition*, he goes on, *in which the Clergy are*, as it were, *shut out from any share of the main part of the care of souls.*’ He speaks next of our imperfect state of reformation, for want of *discipline* : Without which, no Church, no reformation, can be perfect, or any thing like it. And then, of the *terms of communion* ; which, he observes, occasion many scruples. Here only we shall take in some of his words. ‘ I wish some things may be taken away, and that other things may be softened and explained. Many of these things were retained at the reformation [with the history of which he was as well acquainted as any man living] to draw the people the more intirely into it, &c. And this was [at that time] a just and lawful consideration. But it is now at an end. None now are brought over from popery by this means : There is not therefore such a necessity of continuing them still, as there was for keeping them up at first. I confess it is not adviseable, without good reason for it, to make great changes in things, that are visible and sensible ; yet, upon just grounds, some may be made without any danger.’ He then specifies several particulars. ‘ No inconvenience could follow, on leaving out the *cross in baptism*, &c. on regulating that indecent way of *singing prayers*, and *laymens reading the Litany*, in cathedrals. All *bowings to the altar* have at least an ill appearance, and are of no use. The excluding parents from being *sponsors in baptism*, and requir-

ing

ing them to procure others, is extremely inconvenient, and makes that to be a mockery, rather than a solemn sponſion, in too many. Other things may be ſo explained, that no juſt exception could lie to them,' &c. *Conclusion of the biſt. of his times.* He died in 1714-15, tho' he had drawn up this work and labor of love to the Church and to the Public, ſome years before.

20. Mr. JOHNSON, of *Cranbrooke*, ' Our right reverend Fathers do upon all occaſions hint to us their opinion, of the neceſſity of *reviewing the Liturgy* of the Church of *England*.—And I cannot but conceive ſome hopes, that this will be done, whenever our Convocation ſhall be permitted to enter upon that great work.' [As to the work itſelf, it is by no means great, or very difficult. The chief difficulty is to conquer prejudices. But even this may be done, and in a few years, if proper methods be taken; which we muſt ſubmit to our Governors.] *General preface to collection of laws and canons*, ſect. 36. vol. II. 1720.

21. Dr. READ. ' Some *blemishes* are become, in the opinion of many, the laſt and moſt unanſwerable argument againſt our religion;—and are indeed an offence to almoſt all of our communion; who ſee them not without an inward trouble and concern, as others do with a malicious joy and pleaſure. I may venture to ſay, there is not the hundredth man of our Church [who conſiders] that doth not inwardly condemn, and wiſh a *reformation* of, thoſe particulars. And whenever this is attempted in good earneſt and with vigor, a method may be ſuggeſted, &c. But it is enough to have hinted this for the preſent.' *Eſſay on Simony*, &c. 1737, p. 218, 19.

22. *Part of a Letter from a very reverend and worthy Clergyman, dated Nov. 1748.*

—“ In the general, I should like the Services should not be intermixed, but separate : On common days, the common service : On *Wednesdays* and *Fridays* (not on *Sundays*) the Litany : On *Sundays* and *Holy-days*, the Communion-service, properly introduced : The Lord's Prayer once in each : In all the Services, the Lessons and the Psalms ; or rather portions of them, properly chosen. With respect to the visitation of the sick, burial of the dead, and some other offices, I could wish they were considerably shortened, and in many particulars varied : That the prayers, suffrages, and collects were revised ; and repetitions (as in the prayer for the Clergy, *the beathful Spirit of thy grace, and the continual dew of thy blessing*) omitted ; and the like in the prayer for the Church militant,—*To inspire the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity and concord ; and, Grant that all they, that do confess thy holy Name, may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.* Then as to the petition, ‘ Give peace in our time, O Lord ; *Because there is none other,*’ &c. no Commentator hath explained that satisfactorily.—The jingle in the collect for St. *John* the Evangelist's day should be avoided.

I shall only add, that when divine service begins in our Churches and Chapels, it would seem on many accounts proper, that the doors should be shut.”

After having exhibited the foregoing declarations, it may be proper now to stop a little, and make a
few

few reflections. And on looking back, the following ones do naturally occur to us.

1. We see, that judicious and thoughtful men of our communion have been of the same sentiments relating to these things, from the great Lord *Bacon* at the opening of the last century, down to these times, wherein we are got almost upon the very middle of the present century. The gap we have left between the beginning of King *James's* reign, and the proceedings of the Bishops at *Westminster*, may be filled up by degrees on other occasions. We designedly forbore doing it here.

2. It is observable that they all agree, as in their general proposals of amendments, so in almost all the particulars, that are pointed out by any of them : And where there is any variation with respect to the latter, it is very inconsiderable ; and we may very well believe they would have had no disagreement, had they all met at one conference.

3. Almost every article, which we have submitted to consideration in our *Disquisitions*, hath been touched upon by some or other of these learned men : And they have also suggested some particulars, which we have designedly omitted.

4. Hereby they have precluded all just blame from falling upon the authors of the *Disquisitions* ; who have only brought to view again, what so many persons of indisputable judgment and character had proposed to the world before. Consequently,

5. If any persons, not favorable to the proposal of improvements, shall think fit to oppose us ; they will find themselves obliged, (1) to contest with plain facts, which are stubborn things ; together with
our

our reasonings upon them (such as they be) which will be found more pliable, on better being offered; —and (2) to oppose a whole stream of authorities, and those the best; being the concurrent declarations of so many worthy Bishops and other learned men of our Church, who have given their verdict in our favor. And if no opposition is made, it will be so much the better, and we shall congratulate ourselves on this little success, tho' it should go no further for the present; not doubting but truth, if it be on our side, will work its way in time, and gain more and more grounds by degrees, in proportion as men shall be disposed to hear and consider it with calmness. Yet on the other hand, supposing the things we have objected to, or proposed to consideration, are not cleared up by persons capable of doing it; the natural inference, that too many will be apt to draw, will be this, that the points objected to, cannot be cleared. And if this should really be the case (which we leave to be determined by the event) the world will then, with the most apparent justice, expect a review, and will perhaps take it not a little unkindly to be denied it (δ).

In the mean time, before we proceed further with our reflections here, we shall be so just to those, who

(δ) The following words of a private Letter may deserve to be inserted here :—‘ The *reproach* will remain, ’till something is done; unless it can be shewn, that your observations are not just. Which, whether regarded or not, will put men of sense upon a consideration, and the matter will not *die here*. The cause, if good, will have justice done it by degrees, and after further inquiry. In the mean time you have performed the part of honest men, and have opened the way for reflections, which have been too long smothered, but will be made, I imagine, with greater freedom for the future. It is fit there should be a *moving of the waters* at certain times, to prevent a total stagnation,’ &c.

may

may be of a different judgment from us, with regard to any of the allegations we have produced from the foregoing writers, as to take notice of some things, which may perhaps be plausibly urged against us, in relation to such evidences. As possibly (1) that some of these writers, may have qualified their declarations in some other parts of their works, and even sometimes in the same. We have given our thoughts on this head already ; and here add : Suppose Bishop *Stillingfleet* has argued against *separation* in the book, from whose preface we drew our extracts : does that concern our cause ? We are not pleading for separation, but for removing the grounds of it, as the Bishop has done. And he was of the same mind, when he was member of the Committee in 1689. — Or if it can be shewn, that any of these writers have altered their sentiments afterwards (which we do not know, that any of them have done) this will do us no disservice. We have honestly given their judgment, where it came within our knowledge. And let it also be remembered, that mens second thoughts are not always the best. Sometimes they change from truth to error. Here reason is to judge. (2) If it shall be said, that the judgment even of Bishops, and other learned men, may sometimes with good reason be contested ; we allow it : and any person is at liberty to make what use he pleases of this allowance. Or if we shall be reminded (3) that many other Prelates and men of learning, and perhaps more in number than those we have yet produced, have been of different sentiments with regard to these things ; this will not affect our cause. The thing to be considered is, on which side of the question right reason and true judgment chiefly lie. For that is the great point, and what alone will weigh with impartial men.

6. The renewal of the same complaints from time to time, by so many sensible and serious Churchmen, gives us too much reason to apprehend, that the same will hereafter be reiterated, one time after another, 'till a review is obtained, and the particulars complained of are removed.

7. It is but too obvious, that amongst other causes, it is owing to the want of a review (not a slight and a partial one, like those few we have already had) that there hath been so much uncharitable contention between fellow-protestants in this realm. Which as it is already of too long standing, and very detrimental to Society in Church and State, will undoubtedly be perpetuated, unless proper measures be taken to remove the grounds.

Lastly, had our Liturgy been reviewed and improved, in the manner proposed by those several excellent men, whose judgments we have cited on this occasion; it seems more than probable, that it would have been received in *Prussia*, when, in 1706, the late King *Frederic* shewed so great an inclination to have it introduced and established in his dominions (e).

Having

(e) The following account of this matter, is taken from a MS. Letter to the late Archbishop *Tenison*, and from some other papers as yet unpublished.

'Had the King of *Prussia*'s intention met with the due reception and encouragement in *England*, it was designed to have introduced the Liturgy [of the Church of *England*] first into the King's own chapel and cathedral church, leaving it free for the other churches to follow the example.' [Which, by the way, seems to be the most prudent method, to introduce a Liturgy, either new or reformed, where it shall not be thought proper to injoin it all at once, to take place universally in all congregations.]—'Even after the design miscarried, yet the Divines have laid aside all extempore prayer, and use a form, —Some

Having now, as we think, sufficiently made out point in general from *authorities*, tho' we have produced but few comparatively, and have omitted many more, which we might have cited to our purpose; we own we find ourselves not a little inclined to stop here, and reserve our other evidences, relating to particular points, 'till we shall see some further occasion to produce them. For *here* it is certain (having fixed our limits) we cannot bring in the twentieth part; and if we only *refer* to them, as that may be less satisfactory to such, as have not the authors to turn to, so to others, who have them, the application of every article may not appear so obvious, or the argument so forcible, as we presume we could easily have shewn both to be, by a very little illustration. We think it therefore better upon the whole, to pick out a few passages, with-

' —Some Divines, who were not willing the design should miscarry, drew up a formulary, which is still kept in Manuscript. [It is to be wished, for the honor of religion, and for peace, that our brethren of the dissenting denominations would be pleased to take notice of this, and apply it to a proper use.] — 'The Divines have lately [about 1708] received an order from the King, to draw up separately their thoughts upon a *model of worship and discipline* to be established: — There was also, not long after, a Letter sent from Dr. *Fablon-ski* (the King's chaplain) to a learned *English* Nobleman; of which we think proper to give the following short extract. — *Spero & humillimè rogo, ut mandata non de solo negotio Liturgico atque Hierarchico, verùm etiam de Irenico promovendo, dentur; ut cujus semper quidem magna fuit in Ecclesiâ necessitas, hac tempestate verò est maxima. Neque Ecclesiarum Protestantium unio saltem adversariis nos terribiles redderet, verùm etiam ad ordinem & decorem Ecclesiæ conciliandum eadem conferret plurimum.* — Dated, *Berolinii*, 21 Maii, 1712. — See also *Turretini* orationes academic. orat. viii. p. 205, 213. de componendis Protestantium diffidiis. — Ibid. epist. ser. & potent. *Borussiæ* Regis ad Ecclesiæ & Acad. *Genevensis* Pastores & Professores responsoria. *Itidem*, epistolæ Pastorum & Professorum Eccl. & Acad. *Genevensis* ad sereniss. *Borussiæ* Regem, *Gallicè & Latinè*. Item, *Sam. de Pufendorf*, de rebus gestis *Frederici*, &c. lib. 2. §. 30.

out

out much pains in searching or care in chusing, together with a few references; leaving them to take their chance, as we do our own reflections, with regard to the judgment, that shall be passed upon them.

S E C T. III.

Length of the Service.

Notice hath been taken of this, more than once, in the foregoing extracts; and the objection is of long standing. For we find it was made, when our service was considerably shorter than it is at present. *John Ball*, in his *friendly trial of the grounds tending to separation* (1640) endeavors to remove it; but seems not to do it to competent satisfaction, by alleging the length of public devotions in *ancient times*, and the *modern* practice of the *Armenian Churches*; whose service, he says, takes up four hours in the morning, and the same number in the afternoon. With as much good reason might he (we presume) have taken notice of *St. Paul's continuing his speech until midnight, and preaching long, at Troas*. And to as much good satisfaction doth one of the expositors of our Liturgy answer the demand, *Why we mingle so many services of several sorts?* by giving this for one reason, viz. *In conformity to the Council of Laodicea, which so ordered it*. But then his next reason, *To take off the tediousness of the service*, is a tacit acknowledgment, that the present objection is not without ground.

The *Injunctions* of King *Edward VI.* (1547) allowed, that *when nine lessons should be read in the church, three of them shall be left out; and, when any sermon or homily shall be had, the prime and hours shall be omitted*.

See

See *Irenæus junior* (a *London Clergiman*) 1693. p. 25, 26. *Memoirs of Mr. Boehm's life*, 1735. *Cler. Vade mecum*, ch. 3. where Mr. *Johnson* says, that if an ancient or infirm Clergiman do read the three services at two or three several times, he is more strictly conformable. See also his *Case of a Rector*, addenda, p. 96. from whence, by the way, a common error relating to *psalmody* (and one, that we ourselves, as we discern upon review, have inadvertently gone into) may easily be corrected. For, as he there observes, by King *Edward the sixth's act of uniformity*, it is made lawful, 'To use in churches any prayers or psalms taken out of the Bible, at any due time, not letting thereby, or omitting the service, or any part thereof.'—As to the case of ancient or infirm Clergimen, mentioned by Mr. *Johnson*, Bishop *Gauden*, in his *Considerations* before quoted, seems to think they would be tenderly dealt with, when necessity obliged them to shorten the service. For in answer to the allegation of the great length and burden of the *Liturgy*, to which a man aged or infirm will hardly be sufficient, he says, 'Truly I never knew any such rigor or exaction used towards any Minister, that did soberly and ingenuously shew his conformity to the use of the *Liturgy*, as occasion requires, and as his strength or time would fairly bear.' And he adds, that, in his judgment, 'there might be an appointment of some parts, which shall never be omitted; others appointed on some days and occasions.'—Dr. *Saunders*, in his account of the *State of religion in the diocese of St. David*, exemplifies a case, which we have hinted at under this head in our *Disquisitions*; and it is hoped it may move pity, if we take it in here. 'In some places, the service of the prayers is but partly read, and that perhaps but once a month, or once in a quar-

ter of a year. Nor is it indeed *reasonable* to expect, that they should be better served, while the stipends, allowed for the service of them, are so small, that a poor Curate must sometimes submit to serve *three* or *four* churches for *ten* or *twelve* pounds a year, and that perhaps, when they are as many miles distant from each other. And when it is thus with them, with what order or regularity are they capable of doing that service? And having so little time, and so many places to attend upon, how *precipitately*, as if out of breath, are they obliged to read the prayers, or to *shorten* and *abridge* them? And what time have they or their congregation to *compose* themselves for their devotion, &c.' A lamentable case, most certainly!

S E C T. IV.

(1) *Running the three services into one.*] This has been frequently complained of. See Bishop *Cofin*, in *Nichols's* appendix, p. 36, 68, &c. [N. B. The *Durham-MSS.* there published by Dr. *Nichols*, we chuse to call, indiscriminately, Bishop *Cofin's*, he being the principal compiler of them.] Bishop *Bull's* charge, vol. IV. p. 858. *Johnson*, ubi supra. *L'Estrange's* Alliance, p. 163; and almost all our Ritualists. Dr. *Newton* hath set the matter in a clear and just light:—'These are *distinct* services. In each of them much of the same matter is *repeted*. The reading them at *once*, as *one* service, is unnecessary, and inconvenient; and hath been one cause, amongst others, of the decay of piety in this Land. The mind is wearied, attention fails, infirmity is impatient of long confinement: It requires a good deal of zeal even to approach the places of divine worship. The services being *distinct*, it was originally *intended* they should be read at *different* times. They

They *are* so read in some Cathedrals to this day; and *ought* to be so in all parochial Churches [*and are in some,*] that those, who cannot attend at one hour, may come at another, and all have opportunity to beg pardon of God for their sins, and to praise him for his goodness, every Sunday and Holy-day morning in the year. I do not find any order of Convocation for the jumbling of these services together. The practice seems to have crept into the Church by the negligence of Incumbents, &c. But it is time to let the *reason* of things take place, and to give *invitations*, rather than create *reluctances* to religious duties.' *Statutes of Hertford-college*, p. 13. Note (a).

(2.) *Frequent repetitions* of the same things.] Dr. Hammond's answer here (relating to the *Lord's-prayer*, and the *prayers for the King*) confirms the allegations referred to under the foregoing article. *View of the directory*, §. 32.—*Iren. junior*, sect. 6. —*Vox pop.* p. 2.

S E C T: V.

(1.) *Translation of the psalms.*] Dr. Prideaux, in his *Letter to a Friend*, p. 15, says 'the old translation differs much from *true Scripture*,' &c.—

(2) As to having *select psalms* for the public service; Dr. Bennet owns there are many things in the psalms, as read promiscuously, which cannot be applied to our own particular circumstances, &c. *On the Liturgy*, p. 42. note 46. p. 240, note 4. See also *Seymour's* advice to the readers of *Common-prayer*, p. 26.—(3) *Standing at the psalms*; recommended by Dr. Bennet, p. 35. n. 34.—(4) That the *choice of the singing-psalms* should not be left to the parish-clark; See Bishop *Wetenball* on singing, p. 563.

S E C T. VI.

The *apocryphal Lessons*.]—Some are ill-chosen, and *offensive*: Bishop *Cosin* in *Nichols's* append. sect. ii. p. 67. See also p. 9. Dr. *Prideaux*, Letter to a friend, p. 15, says there are some things *ridiculous* therein. Also *Vox pop.* p. 1. And Dr. *Lightfoot* affirms, that some parts of the *apocrypha* are inconsistent with canonical Scripture. More might be added, even to make us ashamed of retaining some things. But in tenderness we forbear. Only thus much, we presume, may be spoken without offence; that the wonder is the greater, that a Divine of our Church, coming out of the Committee or Convocation-room, at the last review, should *rejoice* so much, as it is said he did, that he and his friends *had carried it for Bel and the Dragon*.

S E C T. VII.

The *Epistles* and *Gospels*.] The *Note* under this head, in the *Disquisitions*, continued.—Whoever shall think proper to look into our *Epistles* and *Gospels* of the *old version*, as set down in our *old Common prayer* (which is still in so many hands) will see, with what good reason our Revisors laid that version aside; and will wonder for what reasons it could be kept in so long, when abounding, as it manifestly did, with such a number of odd, uncouth, obsolete and coarse expressions; when many of them were so obscure, as scarce to be understood; many so ambiguous, as to leave the sense doubtful; many so literal, as to be hardly *English*; others so awkward, as to be scarce agreeable to common sense; and numbers so ill translated, as to disagree with the sense of the Authors.

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‘ yeere with strange blood. One of the wenches of
 ‘ the High Prielt.’ And by the way is ךסס
יִשְׁשׁוּ at all more elegantly rendred in our present
 translation? Perhaps there might be too much re-
 gard paid to a favorite hypothesis in this circumlo-
 cution; ‘ That wee through election might receiue
 ‘ the inheritance, that belongeth unto the naturall
 ‘ sonnes,’ Gr. *ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν*. And
 can we allow this declaration (we mean, as here
 translated) to be sound divinity? viz. ‘ He, that is
 ‘ dead, is justified from sinne.’

What need, you will say, of scraping up this
 odd collection from an old discarded translation?
 —Without giving any other answer, we shall
 say, that we are desired by some ingenious and ju-
 dicious persons to propose the following queries,
 leaving the public to consider and judge, (1) Whe-
 ther this old translation, if it was still retained in
 our Church’s Liturgy (as it is very happy it is not)
 would not afford abundant matter for diversion and
 ridicule to our modern libertines and unbelievers?
 (2) Whether there may not be some, and perhaps
 many instances, in our present translation, which lie
 but too much exposed to the like treatment? (3)
 Whether there may not therefore, be as much occasion
 now, as there was at the last review, for resolving
 upon proper measures to oblige us with a better
 translation? And, lastly, whether the old transla-
 tion, as much as we may be thought to have under-
 valued it, may not yet, in many particulars, be so
 much preferable to the present, as to be of singu-
 lar service, on a review, towards correcting and
 improving the latter? We would allow both transla-
 tions their just praise, even when we take the liber-
 ty to mark out some of the defects of both. And
 that our aim is good, in the reflections we have be-
 stowed upon each, must, we suppose, be evident to
 every

every one, who can judge of the necessity of a new translation superior to either.

S E C T. VIII.

Albanasian Creed.] Instead of entring into any particulars relating to so nice a subject, or quoting any passages from the late controversies upon it, we chuse to lay down a few plain and general observations, tending to peace and piety, drawn from the writings of several learned and judicious men; leaving the Reader to apply them more or less to the present purpose, according as his judgment shall direct him. For we still think, and always shall, that the great doctrine of the Trinity was never designed for controversy; and being (as this creed justly confesses it to be) a subject above the reach of human comprehension, it must for that very reason be a subject very unmeet for disputation among frail and fallible men.

Mr. HALES, of *Eton*. ‘ Give me leave to shew you, as far as my conceit can stretch, what course any man may take to save himself from offering violence to Scripture, and reasonably settle himself, any pretended obscurity of the text whatsoever notwithstanding. For which purpose the diligent observing of *two rules* shall be thorowly available. First, ‘ The literal, plain and uncontroversible ‘ meaning of Scripture, without any addition or supply by way of interpretation, is that alone, which ‘ for ground of faith we are necessarily bound to ‘ accept, except it be where the Holy Ghost himself treads us out another way.’—*St. Basil’s* speech (μή ἐρώτα με τὴν διάνοιαν, κ. τ. λ.) ‘ Ask not ‘ me the sense,’ &c. is of excellent use, to repress our boldness; whereby many times, under pretence of some inconvenience, we hinder Scripture from that

that latitude of sense, of which it is naturally capable.—2. ‘ In places of ambiguous and doubtful, or dark and intricate meaning, it is sufficient, if we religiously admire, acknowledge and confess ; using that moderation of *Austin* ; *Neutram partem affirmantes, sive destruentes, sed tantummodò ab audaci affirmandi præsumptione revocantes.*’—I verily suppose, that *Honorius*, Bishop of *Rome*, gives unto the Church the best counsel, that ever yet was given for the settling of doubts, and final decision of controversy. Which sounds to no other purpose but this : ‘ That whereas there was lately raised in the Church a controversy concerning the duality or unity of ‘ wills in Christ,’ [a controversy, by the way, which the Church had nothing at all to do with, as having no connection or concern with religion ;] ‘ since ‘ that hitherto nothing in the Church concerning ‘ either part hath been expressly taught ; his counsel ‘ was, that men would rather cease to doubt, than ‘ to be curious to search for any solution of their ‘ doubtings ; and so abstain from teaching doctrinally ‘ either part, and content themselves with that express measure of faith [or those express declarations ‘ of Scripture,] with which the Church hath hitherto rest satisfied, [without defining or determining on either side of the question.] How this advice of the Bishop was applicable to the question then in controversy ; or what reason moved the Council [which met about it] to think, that it was absolutely necessary for them, to give an express decision, and determine for the one part, belongs not to me to discuss. But I verily persuade myself, that if it had pleased those, who in all ages have been set to govern the Church of God, betimes to have made use of this advice, to have taught men rather not to have doubted, than to have expected still solution of their doubtings ; to have stopt and damm’d up the originals and springs of controversy,

rather

rather than by *determining* for the one part, to give them as it were a pipe and conduit to convey them to posterity ; I persuade myself the Church had not suffered that inundation of opinions, with which at this day it is over-run.—How many of the questions even of our own times, even of those that are at home amongst us, might by this way long since have been determined ?—It shall well besit our Christian modesty to participate somewhat of the Sceptic, and to use their ἐπέχειν, 'till the remainder of our knowlege be supplied. Let me request you to bear with me : It is not depth of knowlege, nor knowlege of antiquity, nor sharpness of wit, nor authority of Councils, nor the name of the Church, can settle the restless conceits that possess the minds of many Christians. Only to ground, for faith, on the plain and uncontroversible text of *Scripture* ; and for the rest, to expect and pray for the coming of our *Elias* ; this shall compose our waverings, and give final rest unto our souls.' *Sermon at Oxford, 1617. concerning the abuses of difficult places of Scripture, and the remedies against them.*

Archbishop USHER, &c. ' But the *principal thing* to be prest and inculcated is, That in divine matters, especially such high mysteries, we ought to have a certain and set *Rule* to speak by, as St. *Austin* sometime prudently counselled ; and that it were good to refrain from all novel expressions, and to confine the liberty of prophesying to such forms and phrases, as the Holy *Scriptures* furnish us with.' Letter to Mr. *John Dury*, (1634) signed by the Archbishop, Bishop *Bedell*, and Bishop *Richardson*.

Lord FALKLAND. ' I am confident, that all who receive the *Scripture* for the *only Rule*, and believe what is there plain to be only necessary, would soon agree in as much as is necessary ; and in concluding

cluding no necessity of agreeing in more ; there being no doubt but it would soon appear plainly, what is plain.' Reply to *White*. Mr. *Chillingworth's* sentiments were the same, and are well known. And Mr. *Hales* observes, (in the sermon above referred to) that *our Church stands necessarily bound* to adhere to that *only rule*, which Lord *Falkland* mentions ; adding, that ' if, in place of the ' glosses of the Ch. of *Rome*, we set up our own ' glosses, (to supply what the plain text of Scripture ' cannot yield) thus to do were nothing else, but to ' pull down *Baal*, and set up an *Ehod* ; to run ' round, and meet the Ch. of *Rome* again in the ' same point, in which at first we left her.'

Bp. CROFT. ' There hath not been a greater plague to Christian religion, than school-divinity ; where men take upon them the liberty to propose new questions, make nice distinctions and rash conclusions of divine matters.—Had that most prudent and pious *Constantine*, the first and best of Christian Emperors, pursued his own Intentions, to suppress all disputes and all new questions of God the Son, both *homocousan* and *homoioousan*, and commanded all to acquiesce in the very *Scripture expressions*, without any addition ; I am confident the *Arian* heresy had sooner expired.—But when Christian Doctors fell to cunning disputing, introducing new forms of speech, and nice expressions of their own coining, some approving, some opposing them ; great discords, wars and confusions soon followed.' *Nak. Truth*, p. 5, 6.—Διὰ το ἀπείργειν ἀγράφοις χρῆσθαι φωναῖς, δι' ἃς σχεδόν ἡ πάντα ἐγγέγονε συγχυσις καὶ ἀναταξία τῆς ἐκκλησίας, &c. *Theodoret. eccl. hist. lib. 1. c. 12.* Which observation appears to be most true (but most unhappily so) to this very day. And it is to be feared, it will never be happy with the Christian World, till we return to the *old way*

way again, and be content with Christianity in its *Scripture simplicity*.

DR. HAMMOND. ' If we would all keep ourselves within that moderation [which the Church hath shewn,] and propose no larger catalogue of *credenda* to be believed by all, than the *Apostles Creed*, as 'tis explained in our catechism, doth propose ; and lay the greater weight upon consideration and performance of the *vow of baptism*, and all the commands of God, as they are explained by Christ ; and then only add the explication of the nature and use of the *Sacraments* in those most commodious and intelligible expressions, which are there set down ; I should be confident, there would be less *bating* and *damning* one another (which is most ordinarily for *opinions* ;) more *piety* and *charity*, and so [more] *true Christianity* among Christians and Protestants, than hitherto hath been met with.' *View of the Directory*, sect. 40.

DR. CUDWORTH. ' Surely the Way to heaven, that Christ hath taught us, is plain and easy, if we have but honest hearts. We need not many criticisms, many school-distinctions, to come to a right understanding of it. Surely Christ came not to ensnare and entangle us with captious niceties, and to puzzle our heads with deep speculations, and lead us thro' hard and craggy notions into the kingdom of heaven. I persuade myself, that no man shall ever be kept out of heaven, for not comprehending mysteries, that were beyond the reach of his shallow understanding, if he had but an honest and good heart ready to comply with Christ's commandments,' &c. *Serm. before the House of Com.* 1647. The observations are applicable, upon the whole, to prevent disputes about what we cannot comprehend or explain ; and for this end only are they

they here quoted. And accordingly it is a good advice given in one of our *Homilies*: ‘ Take upon
 ‘ you to expound Scripture no further, than you
 ‘ can plainly understand it.—Humility will only
 ‘ search to know the Truth ;—and will not pre-
 ‘ sumptuously and rashly define any thing, which
 ‘ it knoweth not.’ And that observation of Abp.
Wake is a very just one: ‘ In matters of this kind,
 ‘ which are so far above our capacity, and of which
 ‘ we know nothing, but what God has been
 ‘ pleased to reveal to us, we must speak as God,
 ‘ in his Word, has taught us to speak.’ *Catech.*
 sect. 9.

Abp. TILLOTSON. ‘ He was in great doubt,
 whether the surest way to persuade the world to the
 belief of the sublime truths, that are contained in
 the Scriptures, concerning God, the Father, the Son,
 and the Holy Ghost, and concerning the Person of
 Christ, was to enter much into the discussing of
 those mysteries. He feared that an indiscreet dwelling
 and descanting upon those things, might do
 more hurt than good. He thought the maintaining
 these Doctrines, as they are proposed in the
Scriptures, without entring too much into explanations
 or controversies, would be the most effectual
 way to preserve the reverence, that was due to them,
 and to fix them in men’s belief.’ Bp. *Burnet*’s sermon
 at his funeral.—See and apply (if thought pertinent)
 the observation in *Bower*’s lives of the Popes,
 p. 401, &c.

With respect to the *condemnatory clauses*, the following
 passages may be applied ; and we earnestly wish they may
 be applied effectually, and prove useful.

Bp. BEDELL.

Bp. BEDELL. ' I will not easily believe, that you can find in your heart to count that man a dog, and out of the Church, and in a state of *damnation*, that stedfastly believeth in our Lord Jesus Christ, and by him in the blessed *Trinity*; that confesseth all the doctrines of holy *Scriptures*, the sum whereof is in the *Creed*; that, lastly, with a *charitable* affection embraceth all, that hold this faith, throughout the world, yea even those, that hate and persecute him to death.' *Letter to Wadsworth*, 1620.—Again, in another *Letter*: ' I do not take upon me to *fore-judge* you, or any other, that doth not, with an evil mind, and self-condemning conscience, only to maintain a faction, differ from that, which I am persuaded is the right. I account we hold one and the same faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and by him in the blessed *Trinity*. To his judgment we stand or fall.' *Append. to his life*, p. 485.

Bp. BURNET. ' We are far from thinking, that this proof [concerning the *Filioque*, &c.] is so full and explicit, as to justify our *condemning* any Church, that should stick exactly to the first creeds, and reject this addition.' *Exp. on Art. 5*.—Again: ' By this [condemnatory declaration] we do not limit the mercies of God towards those who are under such darkness, as not to be able to see through it, and to discern and acknowledge these truths. It were indeed to be wished, that some *express declaration* to this purpose were made by those, who have *authority* to do it.' *On art. 8*.

Bp. HOADLY. ' I confess I agree with you thus far, that I cannot apprehend, how the public service would suffer, were there no such damnable sentences ever read in it. Nay, I am of opinion, that the Doctrine of the Trinity would be better secured,

and this very account of it better received, without such sentences, than with them.' *Reas. of Conform.* p. 74. Vid. *Vox populi*, p. 4.

To conclude the whole with one observation, that may be useful : Bp. Sparrow, in his *Rationale*, saith, ' *That the Te Deum is both a Creed, containing all the mysteries of faith, and a most solemn form of thanksgiving, praise, and adoration,*' In loc. And some excellent men of his Order, now living, are exactly of the same judgment.—How soon, how easily, and how happily, would the Church be at peace, if this admirable composition could be thought sufficient by all, without condemning any other form !

S E C T. IX.

Catechism.]—Wants improvements, &c. Bp. Croft thinks it may be necessary to make additions to it, and offers some useful proposals ; *Nak. truth*, p. 56. So doth Bp. Gauden, *Considerations*, p. 40. See Mr. Saywell, *divine original of Confirmation*, p. 51. *Nature and necessity of catechising* (Cambridge, 1746.) p. 9, &c. *Nelson's festiv.* pref. p. 16.—We want a *larger Catechism*. See *Canon* 79 ; and Dr. Read's essay, p. 176. There was a catechism for *communicants* proposed to be drawn up in 1561. And Dean Nowel's catechism was allowed and enjoined by the canons of 1571, to be taught in schools. Dr. Colman published an essay, by way of catechism, on *Confirmation*, 1716.—Some think we also want a *smaller catechism*. See Dr. Ford's scheme of a *shorter catechism*, for the benefit of the younger sort of catechumens, 1684. And Abp. Synge's abstract of the Church catechism, 1742.—Lastly, it is to be wished, that catechisms, of all sorts, were made as clear and plain as possible, all abstruse and

and all disputable points being intirely avoided, as foreign to the design of such initiatory instructions. The author of the *Discourse on the rise and power of Parliaments* (1677) proposes, 'That a catechism adapted to the meanest capacity be composed, shewing the duty of Christians, according to the express words of the text of Scripture, without straining or misapplying any one, (as is done in too many of those now extant) and without touching upon any one disputed point.' p. 102. Dr. *Worthington's* catechism comes up exactly to this description, and is approved by Mr. *Locke*, as the best of its kind that he had seen. Catechisms, most certainly, should be free from all matters of *doubtful disputation*; and most of all, *divine offices*. For however right a proposition may be in itself, it can scarce be thought right by men of peace and piety, to interweave it in a dogmatic and scholastic form, with our addresses to the Supreme Being.— Were it not likely to be more invidious than useful, it would be easy to point out some expressions, in one of the most solemn offices of our Church, which are thought to be extremely improper in applying to the Almighty. And surely we should never introduce any controversial topics into such offices, much less insist upon them dogmatically, and speak of them to God in prayer, as we would to men in a dispute. Here then, if in any Instance, Abp. *Wake's* complaint is but too apparently applicable, when (in one of his sermons) he speaks of men's being *so narrow-spirited, as to mix the controversies of faith with their public forms of worship; and making their Liturgies, instead of being offices of devotion to God, to become tests and censures of the opinions of their brethren.* The sentiments of Bp. *Bradford* and Mr. *Hales*, relating to this subject, are well known, and need not be produced.

S E C T. X.

The *Collets* passed over.—*Prayer for the Parliament.*]—It is the less to be wondered, that the title was inserted in K. Charles II'd's time, considering the high opinion, which the Clergy of those days had of that Prince. Dr. Matt. Morgan says, 'The image of the Deity is so closely imprest on him, that the idea comes very near the original.' *Epist. dedic. to Abp. Sancroft, before the 1st vol. of Plutarch's morals*, 1684.—'The whole Clergy of the diocese of *Litchfield* were of opinion, that his Majesty had still the old apostolical spirit of discerning, having sent them a Prelate so wise and learned as Dr. *Hacket*.' His life by Dr. *Plume*, 1675. Nevertheless, see Bp. *Burnet*'s hist. of his time, vol. i. p. 183. Bp. *Fleetwood*'s life, p. 6. K. Charles's Character by the Duke of *Buckingham*, Dr. *Wellwood*, &c. And as to the reasonableness and expediency of dropping such a title in our divine service, see the two *Letters relating to the Convocation, and alterations in the Liturgy*, 1689. Dean *Prideaux*'s Life, lately published; *Contempt of the Clergy*, 1739, p. 139, 141. Dr. *Nichols*'s paraphrase on this prayer, deserves notice; as also the style in *Edw. 6th*'s first Common-prayer, &c. *Thy Servant King Edward*. There is an admirable prayer for the *Parliament* in the form used by the *Convocation*. It is to be hoped, that at another review, it may be thought proper to insert a translation of it in the Common-prayer, to serve for an alternative.

S E C T. XI.

The *Litany*.] Dr. *Bennet* and Mr. *Wheatly*'s complaints of irregularities, &c. are well known.—Bp. *Sparrow* intimates another irregularity, not taken notice

notice of by either of them. He says, ' That the former part of the Litany may be said by a *Deacon*; but in the latter part, from the Lord's prayer to the end, the *Priest* (ξ) hath a part more peculiar, by reason of the eminency of that prayer.' &c. He likewise asserts, that some of the following collects and petitions are to be offered up *secretly* by the priest, giving his reasons for this (one is, to gain reverence to the office.) And he takes notice of some other inaccuracies in the common performance of this office, which we chuse to pass over. *In loc.* edit. 1657, the only one now at hand. Now if this Writer's observations be just, should we not have more explicit Rubrics, to prevent irregularities? Or if they are not, to set the matter right, and remove scruples?

Some have objected to those repetitions, ' *Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us: Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us.—O Christ, hear us: O Christ, hear us. Lord, have mercy upon us: Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us: Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us: Lord, have mercy upon us.*' Might not the objection be easily and effectually removed, without leaving out any one of these petitions? *viz.* by only enjoining, that they should each of them be put up by Minister and People *together*, and not alternately.

S E C T. XII.

Communion-office.] Some defects in it observed by Bp. *Cosin*, in *Nichols's* append. sect. 54, 61, and

(ξ) See Lord *Bacon's* accurate remarks on the word *Priest*, and the confounding of *Minister* with the *Sacrificer*, &c. *Considerations concerning the Liturgy.*

67. *l'Estrange* intimates, that it might be well improved from the *Scotch* liturgy: *Alli.* p. 191, 194. See *Johnson's collections*, vol. 1. pref. §. 36. and Bp. *Wetenball's* criticism upon the *words of consecration*, as in our present version, and retained in our Office; which, he says, *makes the command nugatory, or to signify just nothing.* Frequent communic. p. 12, &c. With due submission to so great and so good a man, his criticism seems to be, though we would not say, nugatory, yet we might venture to say, not very solid. *Sed quære.*—The words, *I bid you ALL that are here present*, are thought to be somewhat improper; since besides that *All present* may not be fit, the 28th canon expressly forbids the admission of *strangers*; who yet may happen to be some of those, that are *present*, since the *act of uniformity*, 1^{mo} *Eliz.* allows men upon reasonable let, with regard to their own parish-church, to resort to some [other] usual place, where *Common-prayer* shall be used. The exhortation in *K. Edward 6th's Order of Communion* began thus: *Dear friends, and you especially, upon whose souls I have cure and charge, —I intend by God's grace to offer to all such, as shall be there godly disposed, &c.*—The exhortations are supposed to be much too harsh and severe. ‘Some expressions there are in our Church's *Liturgy*, which appear as harsh and frightful, as any things, that have been preached or written by her Divines; particularly in the *first exhortation to the communion*, &c. And in the *last exhortation*, at the time of the celebration, these words are, in my opinion, very unseasonably and unhappily read; *So is the danger great, if, &c.* I have therefore observed some prudent Divines never to read the *first*; and the late eminent *Dr. Fell*, Bp. of *Oxford* (to my knowledge) did not use the *latter* in *Christ-Church*.—’Tis possible some more learned, than I, may give more weighty and satisfactory reasons, why our Church

continues

continues those discomposing expressions in her sacred offices, &c. Some great Divines, some of the highest order, with whom I have had the honour to be acquainted, have expressed their trouble, that they were retained, being sensible of the ill consequences attending them. And I hope, as old as I am, yet to see them fall under the consideration of a wise and holy Convocation, and to be decently laid by.' *Non-communicant instructed* (1709) p. 8, 9, 21. He disapproves of putting men upon difficult preparations, saying, there can be none better, than leading good lives. And he seems to think the Church's preparatory exhortation might have been better contrived. 'It had been better in the main to have been without such a preparation for the sacrament, as proves a discouragement to receive it. And as to the devotional books on this argument, he observes, that they are 'so clogged with unnecessary and impracticable rules, that the meaner and more ignorant Christians receive little or no advantage by them.' Part 2. p. 39. and part 1. p. 8.

As to the want of sufficient power and encouragement to repel *notorious offenders* from the Lord's table, see Bp. Andrews in Nichols's append. p. 36. Bp. Cofin, *ibid.* p. 68. who says, there ought to be a clearer and more determinate rubric. See also p. 36. and Dr. Nichols's own sentiments; note (c) on the 2d rubric. Vid. *l' Estrange*, p. 163, 4. Bp. Hacket lamented the promiscuous admission to the Lord's table, without power of preventing it; *Life by Plume*. And so did Lesley; case of the Regale, p. 179.—With respect to *qualifying for offices*, &c. the Earl of Yarmouth said, he feared, that act of Parliament, which designed so much good, would in time take away the reverence due to that holy ordinance, and make it a formal thing, only to be done of course; Dr. Hildeyard's serm. at his funeral. See the dis-

sent of the Lords, &c. upon the occasion of the Bill's passing. Vid. *Watson's compleat Incumbent*, c. 31.

S E C T. XIII.

Confirmation.] Intended by our Reformers to be every year; *Reform. leg. eccl. tit. de Eccles. & Min.* c. 12. And to make this the more practicable and easy in large dioceses, Bp. *Croft* wishes there were *Rural Deans* appointed by Bishops to examine, confirm, and licence to the Lord's Table, &c. *Naked truth*, p. 55. See some remarkable items concerning Bp. *Lloyd*, in Dr. *Bray's* dedic. of his *lectures on the catechism*. Vid. *Heylin's* introd. to Abp. *Laud's* life, p. 11. — Concerning the qualification of *proper years*, &c. see Bp. *Cosin's* notes in *Nich.* append. p. 56, 58. Bp. *Patrick's* works of the ministry, p. 66, 69. Bp. *Fleetwood's* charge (1706) p. 17. Bp. *Gibson's* letter of inquiry, 1717. He recommends the age of 16, in his *Directions in order to confirmation*.

S E C T. XIV.

(1) *Office of Matrimony.*] King *James I.* at his coming to the crown, allowed the commissioners at *Hampton-court* to put in, *With my body I thee worship, (and honor)* if they pleased. *Nichols's* supplem. Qu. Why not *honor* only? — (2) *Office of visiting the sick.*] Defective: Vid. *Wheatly*, p. 451, 478. *Stearne*, de visit. infirmorum, ep. dedic. & in ipso libello, p. 47, 63, 76, 93. *Cler. vad. mec.* c. 3. sub fin. Dr. *Ashton's* life, p. 41. — As to the form of *absolution*, see Bp. *Cosin* in *Nich.* append. p. 66; where he quotes an old form; — *Quantum ad vos pertinet accusatio, & ad nos remissio, absolvi-*
mus,

mus, (o) &c. And the form of *anointing*, in the first Common-prayer of *Edw. 6.* may be consulted. Bp. *Burnet* on artic. 25. p. 283. *Qu.* Whether his Lordship's opinion be just, with regard to the design of our Church in her form of absolving the sick? Bp. *Fleetwood's* account of it, perhaps the best; *Charge*, 1710. tit. 1. qu. 13. See an account of some irregular freedoms taken with this form (relating to Sir *John Friend*, and Sir *Will. Parkyns*, 1689) in *Nelson's* rights, p. 12, and *Tennison's* life, p. 60. — N. B. In the *Irish* articles of religion, chiefly done by Abp. *Usher*, (artic. 6.) the power of the keys is said to be only *declarative*. — As to *communion of the sick*, see an objection to one omission, made by Bp. *Cofin*, in *Nich.* append. p. 70.

S E C T. XV.

Offices of Baptism, public and private.]—From the practice of the antient Church, and the rubric to the office of baptism, in the 1st Com. Pr. of *Edw. 6.* an argument may be drawn for altering a considerable part of that office, or at least for abating the rigor of too many expressions in it. The point seems to be carried much too high, from an over-great deference to the harsh opinions of St. *Austin*, *Fulgentius*, and other writers of the 4th, 6th, and following centuries.—It may be observed, that Abp. *Synge*, in his treatise on *fundamentals*, cautiously declines the question about infant-baptism,

(o) We meet with the following form of *absolution* in the old *penitential canons* of A. D. 963; which, for its moderation and modesty, in the height of popery, may very well deserve our notice. 'The Almighty God, who created the heaven and the earth, and every creature, have mercy upon thee, and grant thee forgiveness of all thy sins, which thou hast ever committed from thy being made a Christian to this Time, thro', &c.

and gives us room to think, that he did not look upon it as a fundamental point. What we would argue from hence is, not that infants are not to be baptized, but that we should not lay that high stress upon the matter, which many writers seem to have done, (as when Bp. *Sparrow*, for instance, speaks of the hazard of the infants *souls*; which Abp. *Laud* very prudently avoided asserting;) and that we should re-examine the subject, and review the office.—‘ That *four doctrine* (*viz.* the absolute necessity of baptism to salvation) is now pretty much worn off with its sourer parent, the doctrine of an absolute reprobation; which made the cruelty of that opinion sit the more easy upon the mind:—The primitive Church did assert the salvation of such catechumens, as died without baptism; and I believe there are few, that will peremptorily assert the damnation of those children, who now-a-days depart without it.’ Dr. *Read*’s essay, p. 207.—Hence arises an argument against the common solicitude about *Private Baptism*. Many learned men have thought the public alone sufficient, and more honorable to religion. ‘ I have often marvelled (says Lord *Bacon*) that when the Book, in the preface to public baptism, doth acknowledge that baptism, in the practice of the primitive Church, was an anniversary, and but at set times, it should afterwards allow of *private baptism*,’ &c. *Consid. con. the Liturgy*.—*Collier* says, the *English Refugees at Geneva*, in *Q. Mary*’s reign, ‘ very commendably declare [in their Liturgy] at the administration of baptism, against christening in private houses.’ *Eccl. hist.* vol. 2. p. 401.—And it is a just complaint, which a living author makes, that ‘ many are extremely solicitous about their children being admitted to baptism forthwith in a *private way*, especially if they be not very like to live, tho’ to those only, who do,

are

are most parts of the *office* evidently appropriated. On the least indisposition, the Clergyman is sent for, at all hours of day or night, and they grow quite inconsolable, if any one should happen to die unbaptized on any account : but if that ceremony once be got huddled over, they think all is done, or are very willing to trust Providence for the rest.
Nat. and necess. of catech. p. 4, 5. (π)

Sponsors

(π) A Query here occurs. Supposing (what happens not unfrequently, especially in populous places) that two, not to say more infants, are brought to the Church, in time of divine service, upon a Sunday or Holiday ; the one to be *baptized*, the other, having been baptized already, to be *received as one of the flock of true christian people* : In this case, which of the two offices is to be used ? or is the Minister to read both ? If he reads them both, is there not a manifest inconveniency ? If but one, is there not as manifest an Inconsistency ? for we chuse not to say, absurdity. The particulars need not be suggested, in either case ; they are so obvious. Well then, here at least (or we are greatly mistaken) there wants some new regulation, or better direction than we have at present. And if it be wanting, it will surely be granted. Else a worse charge will follow, than that of inconsistency ; and a charge, that will always stick to our Church, till things are mended. — Again ; supposing two infants (tho' more may sometimes happen) to be brought to the Church at the same time, to be *baptized*. How is the Minister to address the *Sponsors* ? Is he to apply the same words to all indiscriminately, as undertaking for both the children alike ? (for the words of the office make no special provision in this case :) or is he to read over the same office twice ? *viz.* once to each of the parties separately ? — Is there no occasion then for a review ? — Let these and the like instances, whether of defect or impropriety, or both, be passed over and disregarded ever so much, and ever so long, still the world will judge, and not without reason blame. Nor will it be possible to remove the disparagement, that falls upon the Church on these accounts, till it shall be found possible to amend the offices, and till they are actually amended.

☞ If the governing Powers, whether in Church or State, or both, shall think fit, upon these and the like remonstrances, to condescend to give proper direction and encouragement (which may easily be done, without knowing any *names*, if there be but a willingness to consent and contrive) there is sufficient

Sponsors in baptism.] Dr. Jackson submits it to the consideration of the higher Powers, whether there should not be a *solemn adstipulation* required, that the baptized infants shall at years of discretion be brought to ratify their vow at baptism, in public? *On the creed*, B. 10. ch. 50 — With regard to the institution, Bp. Fleetwood observes, that ‘the ancient Christians had more and other reasons to proceed upon, than the late or modern ones had, or can have; and intimates, that the Church would connive at a *relaxation* in some difficult cases.’ *Charge*, 1710, tit. 1. qu. 8, 9. And as to the *abuse* of this institution, it has been complained of by many. Two or three may suffice here. Dean Addison observes, that this *pious custom* is by many turned into an *idle ceremony*; [in effect doing no more than what *Platina* tells us the *sureties* do in the Ch. of *Rome*, viz. hold the child in their arms till it is baptized, and give it a name.] *Primit. institution* (1674) p. 210, 201. Mr. Saywell;—that ‘several *irregularities* have crept into the usage of *godfathers* and *godmothers*: Which appointment, as it is now often performed, is liable to cavil, and deformed by some indecencies, which are directly contrary to the mind of the Church.’ *Divine orig. of confirmation* (1710) p. 42. Another observing and judicious person remarks as follows: ‘That once valuable institution of *sponsors* is now so much degenerated, as to become matter of scandal to dissenters, and of triumph to unbelievers, and of so little benefit to ourselves, as makes it doubtful, whether it be worth retaining.—No objection lies against the appointment in itself; yet as it now stands, it is no security

reason to believe, that great numbers, both of Clergy and Laity, will from henceforward join *openly* in petitioning for a review. At present they seem only to wait the issue of this application.

security at all; and can serve, I fear, only to reproach us: as may, perhaps, be the case with some other things originally of great use and expedience in the Church.' *Neces. of catech.* p. 12, 13.

S E C T. XVI.

Burial-office.]—The *rubric* says, that this office is not to be used for any, that die excommunicate. But, as Archbishop Tillotson observes, was the ancient discipline of the Church (which he confesses was over-rigorous) in any degree put in practice now; in what herds and shoals would men be driven out of the communion of the Church? vol. I. ser. 67. The consequence, we presume, would be, that this office would, comparatively, be but seldom read. See *Wheatly*, arguing the case of *ipso facto* excommunication, p. 494.—The *absolution* of the Church (saith the author of the *remarks* on Bishop Sander son's life) belongs to all that die in the true faith and blessed hope of penitent sinners.' From whence it seems reasonable to argue, that it doth not belong to any, who do not die in such faith and hope: And if the *absolution* of the Church doth not belong to such persons, can her *burial* with any propriety be supposed to belong to them? Supposing this argument to be of any force, if hereupon it should be asked, Over whom then may the burial-office be read with a safe conscience? the answer is, Over all those, to whom the Priest can with a safe conscience pronounce the *absolution* in the office of *visiting the sick*. Such are those *Christian souls*, of whom one of the homilies speaks, *which being truly penitent for their offences, depart hence in perfect charity, and in sure trust, that God is merciful to them, forgiving their sins for the merits of Jesus Christ*. Dr. Nichols says, 'According to the rules of Christian charity, we hope for the salvation of every deceased person, who dies within

within the pale of the Church ; as thinking we cannot, without the greatest arrogance, exclude any in our private judgment, from the common reward of Christians, whom the Church hath not thought fit [which the Church seldom does] to exclude by her public censure.' *Def.* p. 319. To which, common reason and ingenuity would direct men of plain understanding to make the very same answer, that was made by some of the Commissioners at the *Savoy*, at the last review ; *viz.* Some expressions in the office [when applied indiscriminately] are *inconsistent with the largest rational charity*. Which caused the late Mr. *Peirce* of *Exeter* (whose *Vindication*, by the way, was never answered) to make this declaration, which deserves more than a slight regard ; ' These words to be said of every one, that is buried, appear to be such, as would justify our separation, if we disliked nothing else.'—The declaration of Archbishop *Sancroft* is well known, and is confirmed again by *Calamy*, in his second edition of the *abridgment*, with further allegations : The Archbishop owned to Dr. *Tillotson*, that ' he himself was so little satisfied with the *burial-office*, that ' for that very reason he had never taken a cure ' of souls.'—The present Bishop of *Winchester* (who hath written the best of any upon this most difficult subject) doth, like a man of candor, and a friend to truth, make the following free and ingenuous declaration : ' It must be owned, and it ' is too plain to be denied, that in such cases as ' you mention, of *men cut off in the midst of notorious sins, drunkenness, adultery, murder, &c.* this ' office is wholly improper : and sure, we need not ' doubt, but that *at length some regard* will be had to ' the *repeated desires* of many of the best defenders ' of the Church ; and this ground of objection against it wholly removed.' *Reasons of conformity*, p. 62. Mr. *Olyffe's* saying, (third defence, p. 144.)

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‘ To avoid noise, we could easily withdraw ourselves, when such *perplexing* cases happen,’ seems by no means satisfactory. For the dead *must* be buried by some Minister, and according to the office. Mr. *Wheatly* speaks much better. ‘ It must be confessed, that it is very plain, from the whole tenor of this office, that the compilers of it, presuming upon a due exercise of *discipline*, never supposed, that any would be offered to Christian burial, who had not led Christian lives, &c. And if this (which seems the best gloss, that our present circumstances will admit of) be not satisfactory, there seems to be no other remedy left, than that our Governors should leave us to a *discretionary* use of these expressions, either ’till they be altered by public authority; or, which is much rather to be wished, ’till discipline be so vigorously exercised, that there be no offence in the use of them.’ *In loc.* p. 515. See *vox populi*, p. 5, &c. *Church of England’s wish*, pref. p. 16.

S E C T. XVII.

Communion-office.] Bishop *Cosin* observes, that the *rubric* before this office should be more explicit. *Nichols’s* append. p. 71. See *Bucer’s* remark, in *L’Estrange*, p. 328.—‘ It ought surely to be taken into consideration, whether those, who are intrusted on behalf of the Church, do enough towards the discharge of a good conscience, in *wishing* once a year, at reading the office on *Asb-wednesday*, that the discipline of the Church was restored. Or whether it lie not upon them to do something towards *regaining* it, that the Church may be restored to the power it hath from Christ, &c. If any, when this comes to be considered, can content themselves only to *wish* the discipline restored, without moving either hand or foot towards it; they are such

such, as either understand not the usefulness of the discipline of the Church to Christian purposes, or make no conscience of discharging a duty to God in the execution of its ministry, to serve those ends. I say this, because an honest conscience can never satisfy itself, that *wishing* the ministry of the Church to take place, and have the effect it ought to have, is the same with *doing* that, which may restore and render it effectual. *Wishes* are indeed marks of a good intention, and an acceptable zeal, where no more is possible to be done; but *ever to wish*, and make no attempt towards the thing wished for, if it be zeal, is such, as is a reproach to itself.' *Church of England's wish* (1703) p. 4, 5. See the book throughout; written by a very honest and zealous Churchman.

* The restoring of the ancient *discipline* is earnestly desired by the Church of *England* in her office of *Commination*; the performance of which pious wish, or the endeavoring it at least, is a duty incumbent on our Governors, to whom with all due respect we ought to leave it. But, with due submission be it spoken, methinks it looks too much like *dissembling* with God, and imposing on the people, to have this passage stand in our *public Liturgy*, and read solemnly in our congregations once a year, and that too upon one of the greatest facts in our Church, when people are, or ought to be, most serious; and yet no attempt made towards the restoring of this *godly* and much *wished for*, but still *neglected* discipline. A matter well worthy the consideration of both the Houses of *Convocation*; in the zealous promoting whereof, it is heartily wished all their little differences might be swallowed up and finally buried. *Ellesby's* caution ag. ill company (1705) pref. p. 2, 3.

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‘ The Church of *England* has for 200 years *wished* for the restoration of *discipline*, and yet it is but an ineffective wish. For nothing is done towards introducing it, but rather things are gone backward, and there is less discipline for these last 60 years, since the times of the unhappy confusions, than there was before.’ *Bingham’s antiqu.* (1719) B. 15. ch. 9. §. 8.—‘ Once a year, we solemnly profess our *wishes* to have *discipline* restored. But if something farther be not contributed to its restoration, than our *annual wishes* to have it restored, it will lie where it does, disregarded by all, and utterly unknown to the thoughtless many.’ *Dr. Marshal’s* penit. discipl. of the prim. Ch. p. 2. Again, ‘ We answer with some difficulty, when a *want of discipline* is objected to us. If then it be a fault, why should it not be amended? If it be confessed, why should it not be remedied? p. 5. —‘ That solitary *wish* for the restoration of *discipline* we yearly put up at the beginning of *Lent*, has after so many repetitions no other effect, than to convince the world, that order and discipline once dropt, it is hard to raise it up again.—Whither has our *wishing* brought us? We have wished the godly discipline used in the primitive Church at the Beginning of *Lent* were restored. For want of something more than *wishing*, this godly discipline is sunk, and *Lent* itself gone after it.’ *The Hermit*, N° 25, and 29.—See *Vox. pop.* p. 6.

S E C T. XVIII.

Occasional offices ; more wanted.] *Dr. Nichols.*
 ‘ As to the offices out of the protestant Liturgies, &c. they may be useful, if, at any time hereafter, a new review of our *Liturgy* shall be entered upon.
 ‘Tis certain we want a form of *excommunication* ;
 one

one for *absolution* of excommunicates ; and one for *executions*. And methinks 'tis pity, that *family-devotion*, and *preparatory prayers to the sacrament*, should be left only to the direction of private manuals. The old primer was designed for this purpose ; but that is grown out of use. The collection of prayers out of several parts of the Liturgy, and put together for the use of families, tho' useful, is the work only of a private hand. The whole morning and evening prayers, as prescribed in the service-book, are improper for small and poor families ; and many masters of families are hardly capable of understanding the rubrics, whereby to read the service as it is enjoined. If a short form of prayer were drawn up by the *Convocation* (λ), to be used in families, morning and evening, and it were enforced by act of Parliament to be constantly used, under a penalty ; it could not fail of having a considerable effect upon the lives of the people, and would be the occasion of avoiding a most scandalous neglect of a most necessary Christian duty, I mean that of *family-devotion* ; which ('tis to be feared) is but little, or never at all, observed in many families. And upon this account I have published the prayers upon these occasions out of the *French Liturgies* ; not that I propose these forms to

(λ) There was an excellent form of *Family-devotions* drawn up by the Convocation, or else Committee, in 1689. See *Life of Dean Prideaux*, p. 61, &c. 90, &c. 95, &c. As to the notion, that the Common-prayer alone is to be used in families, the Dean was of a different judgment ; vid. p. 63. So was Bishop *Bedel* ; See his *Life*, p. 174. And Bishop *Patrick* ; See preface to his book of Devotions for families. And Bishop *Fleetwood*, (preface to his translation of *Jurieu's* devotions ;) with many more men of eminence and piety. — As to enforcing Family-devotions by act of Parliament under penalty ; it may be presumed, that the worthy Dr. *Nichols* had not sufficiently considered the whole thing, when he expressed his sentiments about it as above.

be made use of in our Church, but only to shew, that our brethren abroad have taken more care of this particular, than *we* have done, and that provision at length *ought* to be made in so very momentous a concern, which has, I think, been too long neglected. *Preface to his supplement, or commentary on the occasional offices.*

A form of *excommunication* particularly wanted. See an excellent one, drawn up by Convocation, 1714. *Wilkins* concil. vol. IV. p. 663, &c. See the *Danish* form of excommunication and absolution, in *Nichols's* supplement.—Form of *re-admission* of excommunicates, a *desideratum* in our Liturgy, occasioned by the want of discipline; *Reeves*, pref. to apol. p. 101.—Mr. *Bingham* submits it to the Convocation, whether a form of *confirmation* for such as were baptized by heretics and schismatics, upon their return, may not be proper. He reckons the Church of *Rome* both heretical and schismatical. *Scholastical hist.* pref. p. 7, &c.—Form for admitting converts from the Church of *Rome*, and restoring those who have *relapsed*, vid. Queen *Anne's* letter to Convoc. 1713. See the form, that was drawn up for such converts, *Wilk.* concil. vol. IV. p. 660, &c.—Form for Visitation of *prisoners*, see Queen *Anne's* lett. 1713. and *Nichols's* supplem. art. 2. p. 10.—Form of *preparation* for the *Lord's-day*, and *Lord's-supper*; *Nich.* supplement.—Form of *consecrating churches and chapels*: vid. King *George's* letter to Convoc. 1715. with the office that was drawn up, *Wilk.* concil. vol. IV. sub an. 1715. The Bishops had consulted about such a form, 1661. *sefs.* 71. and Bishop *King* had formerly drawn one up; vid. *Collier*, eccl. hist. vol. II. p. 709.—A form of Archbishop *Sancroft*, for consecrating *vessels for the communion*, may be seen in *Kettlewell's* life. There is a vein of piety in the prayers, that is very affecting. The Archbishop undoubtedly

ly had authority for what he did : Only *quere* for the present, upon what it was founded ; especially since the last act of uniformity is so very strict.

S E C T. XIX.

Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings, &c.] It hath been observed, that ‘ the Parliament, 14 Charles II. was so cautious of any the least alterations, that they allowed not even the *names* of the King or Queen to be altered but by lawful authority.’ *Johnson’s case* of a Rect. p. 77. Others have observed the *inconveniences*, that have sometimes arisen from hence, and particularly at the great crisis in 1688, during the *inter-regnum*, or, as Bishop Burnet expresses it, *when there was no King or great Seal in England*. Now that inconveniencies may sometimes also arise from the want of *occasional prayers, &c.* drawn up, and to be used, *in time*, will, we suppose, be easily allowed by every man of reason and observation. It is true, as Dr. *Nichols* observes, ‘ that when any extraordinary occasions happen, either for prayers or thanksgivings, the Bishops are impowered by our laws to compose special forms.’ But then it is true on the other hand, that those special forms come out sometimes rather too late, and indeed on some occasions cannot well be prepared and published in proper time ; as was unhappily the case after the great storm in 1703, when we were obliged to wait longer than we could have wished ; tho’ the form, when it did afterwards come out, was indeed an excellent one. Bishop *Gibson* (code, p. 306.) cites a case, where an indictment for using *alias preces, atque alio modo*, in the Church, seems to have been judged insufficient ; ‘ because the prayers may be upon some *extraordinary occasion*, and so no crime. And it was said, the

' the indictment ought to have alleged, that the de-
 ' fendant used *other* forms of prayer *instead* of those
 ' enjoined, which were *neglected* by him.' For other-
 ' wise (as the determination goes on) every Par-
 ' son may be indicted, that useth *prayers before his*
 ' *sermon*, other than such as are required by the
 ' book of *Common-prayer*.' Indeed, if in *prayers*
before sermon, the introducing of proper petitions
 or thanksgivings relating to any *extraordinary occa-*
sion be *no crime*, the case is clear, and the supposed
 inconvenience arising from the precise restrictions of
 the *act of uniformity*, is either totally removed, or
 considerably lessened. Now Dr. *Nichols*, in his
 note on the 17th section of that act (14 Car. II. c.
 4.) assures us, that prayer before sermon is not in-
 consistent therewith. And Bishop *Fleetwood*, in his
defence of praying before sermon, hath shewn, that this
 practice is consistent with the 55th canon. Bishop
Trimnel (in his visitation charge, 1710) goes fur-
 ther, and says, that it ' more immediately answers
 the *design* of the canon, which directs the Minister
 to exhort the people to join in prayer; and which
 (he observes) is more agreeable to the rest of the
 service, than bidding a prayer is; suggesting fur-
 ther, that we ought not to think it any derogation
 from the excellency of our *Liturgy*, to use a prayer
 before sermon.' p. 25.—And indeed, it may very
 well be presumed, that the allowing a little more
 room to common and just discretion, in some cases,
 would be attended with no ill consequence, and
 might be of considerable service to religion. We
 would submit it to consideration, whether Mr. *Bos-*
well's observations concerning the usefulness of that
discretionary power left to the Minister in visiting the
 sick, might not, to good purpose, be extended a
 little further, being properly applied to some other
 cases. ' Is it possible, that any *office* can be con-
 trived, that shall answer all the circumstances and

emergences, which attend sick persons?—To prescribe rules, that shall answer all the emergences attending such persons, is scarcely practicable. The manner of discharging the exhortative part of this duty therefore must in some measure be left to the *discretion* of Ministers, who will best be able to judge what is proper,' &c. For which reason he rightly observes, that the *discretionary power* supposed to be lodged with Ministers, in respect of that exhortative part, is a provision of such a beautiful nature, as shews the *wisdom* of our Church in a particular manner; since by this means they are at liberty to make proper inquiries, to suit their exhortations, &c. as they shall find most *needful* and *convenient*.' So that, upon the whole, 'great advantages must be derived from such a pious expedient.' *Method of study*, vol. II. p. 123, 127, 125.

The way being thus far cleared, we may now go on to support an argument of some consequence, which we have ventured to propose under the head of *occasional forms*, in our *Disquisitions*; begging leave to offer the following observations in further favor of it here. (1.) That it is in itself *reasonable*, that Bishops should have privilege to provide for the emergent and just occasions of their respective dioceses (at least by composing occasional prayers, as need shall require) seems evident. (2.) That the *New Testament* (to speak the least) does not *forbid* this, is no less so. (3.) That in the *primitive Church*, Bishops were at liberty not only to frame occasional prayers, but even Liturgies, &c. for their respective dioceses, and that they actually did so, as there was occasion, is incontestably shewn by *Bingham*; Antiq. B. II. ch. 6. and B. XIII. ch. 5.—(4.) That the Church of *England* antiently, even under popery, allowed them this privilege, is sufficiently known to all, who are skilled in our ecclesiastical

astical antiquities.—It may be proper here to corroborate this last observation, by citing one writer at least. *L'Estrange*, an accurate inquirer into things of this kind, speaks as follows.

‘ Upon inquiry into the ancient practice of this Church of *England*, I find it most apparent, that every Bishop in his diocesan or episcopal Synod had full power to constitute such canons, to make such ecclesiastical orders, and to frame such *services* for the respective diocese, as he and his Clergy should think most convenient. And from hence arose those varieties of *Uses* mentioned in the preface to our Common-prayer. And in truth, such was the custom of the primitive Church, every Bishop in his own diocese doing what he judged meet.—But tho’ here are many *uses* mentioned, yet for the province of *Canterbury*, that of *Salisbury* in estimation so far surpassed the rest, as it became almost of universal observation; being compiled and digested by *Osmund*, Bishop of *Salisbury*.—But what had *Osmund* to do, to give the rule to *other* dioceses? Nothing certainly.—This service of *Salisbury* being now cried up as a most noble model, the rest of the Bishops, of the province of *Canterbury* especially, not having learning enough (for *penè omnes tunc temporis illiterati*, they were then almost all arrant dunces) to frame a better, conformed their dioceses in it. So that what *Osmund* intended peculiarly for his own use, became exemplary to others:—And perhaps upon this very score, the Bishop of *Salisbury*, before the reformation, was constantly and of course *Dean of the King’s chapel*, and chief appointer of the rites and ceremonies. *Addenda*, p. 346, 7. Mr. *Johnson’s* learned friend (cited in his *case of a Rector*, p. 88.) makes several observations to the same purpose; adding, that it was at the discretion of every *English* Diocesan,

to chuse which he pleased of those *Uses* for the churches within his diocese; and that tho' our present Bishops (whose power is restrained by the *statutes of uniformity*) cannot now alter any part of the *stated Services*; yet they may make additions, and recommend, tho' not injoin these additions to the use of their Clergy: Which he proves from the practice of Archbishop *Cranmer* (c), *Parker*, *Grindal*, and *Whitgift*; who published several prayers, &c. not only for the use of their city of *Canterbury*, but for their whole diocese, and even province; and *Aylmer*, Bishop of *London*, did the same for that diocese; from hence concluding, that our Bishops may do

(c) Mr. *Johnson* observes, that Archbishop *Cranmer* did not peremptorily injoin the use of the prayer he drew up in King *Edward's* time, on occasion of domestic tumults; the words preceding the prayer being these: *The exhortation to penance, or the supplication may end with this, or some other like prayer.* And as to Archbishop *Parker*, tho' on account of a war abroad, a pestilence at *London*, and a famine at *Canterbury*, he prescribed a particular form of prayer, with preaching in the cathedral, on *Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays*, in the parish-churches of that city; yet in his letter to *Cecil*, wherein he desires a warrant from the Council, he acknowledges that he and the other Bishops were bolden within certain limits by statutes, and so might stand in doubt how it would be taken. However, *Grindal* and *Whitgift*, the two succeeding Archbishops, did as their predecessors had done; nay the former, we are told, had taken the same liberty while Bishop of *London*. And it is evident, from several of the historical records of Mr. *Strype*, that occasional forms were much more frequently enjoined, during the reigns of King *Edward VI.* and Queen *Elizabeth*, than they have been since. To which we shall only add, that King *Charles I.* and King *Charles II.* (the stat. of uniformity notwithstanding) had forms of prayers in their own chapels suited to the times, and their distress therein. See in *L'Esirange's* append. p. 29, 37, 42.

Note further: Mr. *Johnson* elsewhere says, *There is room* [he means occasion] *for our Bishops to make Uses for their dioceses, if they can judge themselves sufficiently authorized for such a work by our constitution.* Collection of laws, &c. vol. II. gen. pref. § 13.

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the same.' Which Mr. *Johnson* cannot agree to. His reasons may be considered by the learned at their leisure.

We may next subjoin a few observations relating to *occasional thanksgivings*. *L'Estrange* remarks as follows. ' Though it hath been interposed by judicious Mr. *Hooker*, in our Church's behalf, that occasional thanksgivings, &c. *were better provided for by select days assigned by supreme authority for that duty, and by set forms agreeable thereunto, than by a small collect* ; [yet] that defence is, in my opinion, but partly satisfactory. For calamities are most commonly not national, but sometimes provincial : sometimes they quarter only in one city ; sometimes but in a petty village ; and unless they spread to be epidemical, they rarely reach the cognizance of the supreme Magistrate ; or if they do, they will not carry with them importance enough to persuade the indiction of days, either of universal humiliation or thanksgiving, for such minute circumstances.' It may here deserve remark, that the old Common-prayer, in whose behalf *Hooker* wrote, having no *occasional thanksgivings*, that great man thought fit to defend that omission. But such thanksgivings being afterwards inserted by King *James*, the inserting of them was then to be defended. Accordingly Mr. *L'Estrange* declares, in opposition to Mr. *Hooker*, that *the superadding them was not only a commendable, but a necessary act*. Alli. ch. 4. Hence it will be obvious to form a judgment, concerning what is to be defended, and what not. And we may perhaps venture to apply it, even to what the great Archbishop *Laud* hath said upon this very subject. For to the objection, *That there were no thanksgivings in the book of Common-prayer, for the benefits, for which there are petitions*, his Grace thinks it sufficient, amongst other things, to answer, " That

when all things here have an end, endless thanks must have their beginning ;—that because our common necessities are so easily known, but the gifts of God are so diversly bestowed, that it seldom appears what all receive, we are not to marvel, tho' the Church do oftner concur in suits, than in thanks for particular benefits ;—that the greatest part of our divine service consisteth in much variety of psalms and hymns, that every man might offer to God that sacrifice of praise, which best fitteth his occasions ;—and lastly, that the Church cannot always fore-ordain a short collect, wherein to mention thanks upon all occasions : wherefore our custom, when so great occasions are incident, is by public authority to appoint some set and solemn thanksgivings." See in *Nich. supplem.*—These and the like were our reasonings, when there was no *general thanksgiving* in our Liturgy, against admitting any into it. How we have expressed our sentiments upon the subject, since the last review (when our present form was first inserted, and when, as one of our Commentators intimates, *all shadows of defect were removed from our Liturgy*) may easily be seen by consulting the writings of those who have illustrated our divine service since that time.—The same observation may be applied to many other particulars, which we have now in our book ; but which, whilst they were not in it, were always strenuously opposed. And on the other hand, several particulars, which we have since discarded, were then defended ; e. g. *baptism by women*, or private persons : Which was altered by the order of King *James I.* and which no-body, that we know of, now defends. But had the permission continued, we should have seen it defended by more than a few ; and our Ritualists in particular would have shewn, that it was a practice invariably to be retained. And yet it seems natural to observe, that if the necessity

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of *private baptism* is to be defended by any arguments, the necessity of *this* practice may be defended by the very same: Consequently this practice ought to be again restored.

S E C T. XX.

After so many authorities produced, and references made, under the several preceding heads, the world, we presume, will now easily imagine, that we cannot be unprovided with respect to the remaining articles. The truth is, we are rather too well furnished with supplies of this kind: Which for the sake of the Church of *England* we could wish had been much fewer; as then we could have hoped, that the ground of complaint had been much less. Yet on the other hand, the more numerous they are, the more is our application in favor of this Church justified; and the more good company have we to share with us in our fate, if we are rejected or blamed. However, since the multitude of vouchers, how sparing soever we have been in producing them, have hitherto but too long detained us from the conclusion, to which we are hastening; we shall here, at all adventures, break through all obligations of calling them in further to our assistance; only reserving to ourselves the liberty of summoning two or three, upon occasion, if we shall see proper; and in the mean time giving a few general references with regard to certain heads.——

(1.) That our *calendar* and *rubrics* should be reviewed and improved, hath been asserted by a great number of learned men; as Bishop *Cosin*, Dr. *Holder*, Dr. *Wallis*, Dr. *Nichols*, Mr. *Wheatly*, Mr. *Johnson*, &c. The last of whom expressly says, that *an hundred cases, not clearly adjusted in our rubrics, might be discovered*. Collect. of laws, &c. vol. II. præf. p. 17.—(2.) That our *canons* should

be revised, or else new and better ones made: Sir Edward Dering, Dr. Barwick, Bishop Croft, Bishop Wetenhall, *Vox pop.* Mr. (W.) Nelson, Bishop Burnet. One of his predecessors (Bishop Henebman) in 1661, proposed and brought in a draught of new canons; *Acta Convoc.* fefs. 18. *vid.* fefs. 50, 53, &c. And new ones were designed by the Convoc. in 1700. Now that the Sovereign may alter the canons at his pleasure, is allowed and asserted by Archbishop Whitgift, in his letter to Queen Elizabeth, 1584.—(3.) For *Church-Wardens oaths*, *vid.* Bishop Fletcher's orders for regulating the *ecclesiastical courts*, 1595. Sir Edward Dering's complaint in Parliament, 1641. Sp. p. 23. Prideaux's life, p. 100, &c. Apply Bishop Burnet on art. 39th, p. 394, &c.—(4.) With regard to the neglect of *catechizing*, we forbear making any references; they are so numerous, and withal so well known: As are also the complaints concerning our various *grievances*. Yet, among other numerous complaints on this head, see *Grievances of the Church of England, which are not in the power of its Governors to remedy*; supposed to be done by Archbishop Tenison. And it may possibly be worth inquiring, what were the contents of a MS. of Dr. Basire, intitled *Gravamina ecclesiastica*, lately exhibited to sale by Osborn. And as to our want of *discipline* in particular; to the complaints and remonstrances already produced (under the office of *commination*) add the following observation of L'Estrange; which seems to demand more peculiar notice from those, who look upon our constitution as being in all respects truly primitive. That this most laudable, most edifying way of Christian *reformation* by ecclesiastical censures, should, in a Church assuming the style of *reformed*, be so almost totally abandoned: That a *discipline* so apostolical, so primitive, should, in a Church, justly pretending to be the very *parallelo-*
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gram and true representation of those excellent copies (τ), be so very near invisible: That the *restauration* thereof should hitherto become the *wote* [or wish] of so many, and the *endeavor* of so few; is to me a very great wonder. *Alli. ch. xi.*

S E C T. XXI.

The *Homilies.*] Several learned and judicious writers have found fault (υ) with these compositions,

(τ) *The Church of England, the soundest in doctrine, and nearest in discipline to the primitive, of all the reformed Churches in Christendom.* Dr. Mat. Griffith's sermon at Mercer's-chapel, 1660.

(υ) Bishop Overall (in *Nichols's* appendix) asserts 'that the authors [we presume he means authors] of the homilies wrote them in *haste*; that the Church did wisely to reserve the authority of *correcting* them, and of setting forth *others*; and that they have in them many *scapes* in special, tho' they contain in general many wholesome lessons for the people; in which sense our Minister's do subscribe unto them, and in no other.' Bishop Burnet allows, that they need a little correction or explanation; and says, *the Scriptures are often applied in them, as they were then understood; not so critically, as they have been explained since that time.* Exp. on art. 35.—As to *subscription* to them, opinions are various, and no public authority, that we know of, hath interposed to decide the question. Amongst others of our Clergy. Mr. Thomas, in his answer to Owen, p. 103, insists, that the book of *homilies*, and the forms of *consecration* and *ordination*, being included in the 39 articles, are *therefore to be subscribed.* Bishop Burnet allows it in a qualified sense, and says, that *every one, who subscribes the articles, ought to read the homilies; otherwise he subscribes a blank.* Bishop Bull is of the moderate opinion, *Exam. censuræ, animadv.* 23. So was Archbishop Laud, Dr. Bennet, &c. And a proper query, relating to the doctrines of the homilies, may be seen in *L'Estrange*, p. 335. Dean Addison (who was of the same judgment) was for a supply of *new ones*, *Primit. instit. ch. xi.* As were also the following Writers; Bishop Croft, Nak. Tr. *sæpius*, Bp. Sprat, charge, 1695; where he gives some shrewd reasons. See likewise the *discourse of Parliaments* (1677) p. 102. and the *preface* to the homilies may be consulted, with the reasons there given for such discourses; which may be applied in favor of composing new ones.

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and thought them not suitable for the present times. Others have wished for new and better. As for ourselves, having given our sentiments in the *Disquisitions*, we shall decline passing any judgment here. Yet, 'till we are favored with a better set, we cannot well be blamed, if we desire, that the present may at least be revised and altered. For which we presume there will appear but too much reason, when the following particulars are considered.

1. As to frequent *errors* in the *print*, we pass them over, taking notice only of one, which has perhaps kept its place in all impressions except the first by *Whitchurch*, in 1547, which in the *third* form. of good works, hath *palms*, *candels*, &c. (the only true reading) instead of *psalms*, the false one.

2. The homilies abound with *words* either obsolete, or taken now in a different signification, or not easy to be understood by the vulgar, or else such as are too coarse, and disagreeable to the modern taste, &c.—*Evilness*, *repentant*, *ire*, *corsets*, *craking*, *they phantasy*; *silly*, for *poor*; *manslaughter*, for *murder*; *vantage*, *dankish*, *followingly*, *reknowlege*, *agnise*, *abusions*, *repugned*, *accombred*, *sith*, *sithence*, *certes*, *estfoons*, *panims*, *ethmics*, *evangely*, *sumner*, *pointels*: sinners called *dizzards*, *blinkards*, *stallands*, *dastardly daws*, &c. Add, *the cucking-stool*, mentioned as being due to some of them.

3. Names of persons and places, &c. *Achab*, *Helias*, *Hieroboam*, *Core*, *Abiron*, *Absolon*; *Hierome*, *Theophylasts*, *Origines*; *Philippus* King of *Macédonie*; King of the *Francons* named *Charles*; the *Dolphin* of *France*, &c. *Gomorrhe*, *Hierico*, *Euro-pa*.—Books of Scripture cited by names less known in modern times; as thus, 1 *Reg.* 2 book of *Kings*,
for

for 2 book of *Samuel*; 3d book of *Kings*; *Paralipomenon*; *Osee*, *Micheas*, *Abacuc*, *Agge*, *Aggeus*, *Sapience*, *Apocalypse*, &c. N. B. Our *calendar* still retains *Apoc.* for *Revelation*.

4. Incorrect language; odd phrases and expressions; some applications very coarse ones, &c.—*But and if, &c. Without any our defect. Nor the faith also doth not.—Corporal health; have the overhand; an overthwart judgment; scant well learned men; ere them up; glued with concord; lewd remedies; exercise some godly travels; hability to lead a sole (i.e. single) life; the right trade unto heaven; a poor parsonage; Lazarus that pitiful person; Christ, God's natural son; the burden of sin lieth heavy in our neck; return unto God by penance; so shall ye shew yourselves to be sweet-bread unto God.—The whole puddle of sins; that your stomachs may be moved to rise against it; fall down on their marrow-bones; prancing in their pride, pranking and pricking, pointing and painting themselves. 'O thou woman, not a Christian, but worse than a panim, thou minister of the devil, why pamperest thou that carrion-flesh so high, which sometime doth stink on the earth as thou goest? Howsoever thou perfume thyself, thy beastliness cannot be hidden or overcome with thy smells and savors.—But perchance some dainty dame will say and answer me,' &c. Much wicked people pass nothing to resort to the church,—as may appear by this, that a woman said to her neighbor; 'Alas, gossip, what shall we now do at church,' &c.*

5. Many expressions and observations, which can with no sort of truth or propriety be now applied or read in our churches; as being peculiar only to the times, in which the homilies were written, or else relating to those immediately preceding, as but lately past,

past, &c.——‘ Feigned religions of *late days* among
 ‘ us. *Is it* not most evident that the Bishop of
 ‘ *Rome* hath of *late* attempted by his *Irish* Patriarchs
 ‘ and Bishops to break down the bars and hedges
 ‘ of the public peace in *Ireland*, to abuse the igno-
 ‘ rance of the wild *Irish-men*? &c. Religion now
 ‘ of *late* beginneth to be a color of rebellion. Rebels
 ‘ cut and tear in sunder God’s holy word, and tread
 ‘ it under their feet, as of *late* ye know was done.
 ‘ The rude and rascal Commons have moved re-
 ‘ bellions; and the flag or banner born by rebels
 ‘ hath the image of the plough painted therein, with
 ‘ *God speed the plough*, written under in great let-
 ‘ ters; and some rebels fear the picture of the five
 ‘ wounds painted in a clout by some lewd painter;
 ‘ yea, they paint withal in their flags, *Hoc signo*
 ‘ *vinces*; &c.—In *our memory* God took away our
 ‘ good *Josias*, King *Edward*.—Defend thy ser-
 ‘ vant our Queen *Elizabeth*. Our gracious So-
 ‘ vereign [*Elizabeth*] that *now* is.—God hath
 ‘ sent us his high gift, our most dear Sovereign
 ‘ Lord King *James* [in the first edition King *Edward*
 ‘ the sixth.]——*Now* two meals be permitted on
 ‘ the *fasting* day, which our elders did use with
 ‘ one only spare meal, and that in fish only.—The
 ‘ corruption of *these latter days* hath brought
 ‘ into the church infinite multitudes of *images*,
 ‘ decked with gold and silver, set with stone and
 ‘ pearl, clothed with silks and precious vestures, &c.
 ‘ These words be *now* almost in every man’s mouth;
 ‘ He is a gospeller, he is of the new sort, he is of
 ‘ the old faith, he is a new-broached brother, he is
 ‘ a good catholic father, &c. Divorces *now a days*
 ‘ be commonly used by men’s private authority.—
 ‘ In *our time*, and here in our country, every shire
 ‘ should scarcely have one good preacher, if they
 ‘ were divided. A true preacher is in very many
 ‘ places

‘ places scarcely heard once in a whole year, and
 ‘ somewhere not once in seven years, as is evident
 ‘ to be proved.—We cannot *now* hear singing and
 ‘ playing upon the organs at church, that we could
 ‘ before.—The great *Turk* is *now* in *Europe*, at the
 ‘ borders of *Italy*, at the borders of *Germany*, gree-
 ‘ dily gaping to over-run our country. Above
 ‘ *thirty years past*, the great *Turk* had over-run
 ‘ twenty christian kingdoms, &c.

6. ‘ *The old translation still retained in all quota-*
 ‘ *tions of Scripture.*—The lute, harp and shalme.
 ‘ Return as far as unto me. What time soever a
 ‘ sinner doth return, &c. He correcteth us to our
 ‘ nurture. Being of one mind, of one opinion,
 ‘ Having our loins girt about with the verity, and
 ‘ [*being*] shod with shoes prepared by the Gospel.
 ‘ We have a courage and desire rather to be at
 ‘ home with God, far from the body. If we say,
 ‘ that we have company with God. Whatsoever
 ‘ ye have done to any of these simple persons, which
 ‘ believe. The children of the marriage cannot
 ‘ mourn. Rulers are not fearful to them, that do
 ‘ good : The high powers be God’s lieutenants : He
 ‘ is the minister of God to thee for wealth. What
 ‘ similitude will ye set up unto God ? Like be they
 ‘ unto the images, that make them. In the first
 ‘ day of the sabbath, &c.

7. May it not be humbly queried, whether the
 compilers of our homilies were always competent
 judges of the *sense of Scripture*?—Speaking of
 what they elsewhere call *birth-sin*, S. Paul in many
 places painteth us out in our colors, calling us the
 children of the wrath of God, *when we be born*, &c.
 David saith, I was conceived in sins : He saith not
sin, but *sins*, forasmuch as out of one springeth all the
 rest,

rest, &c. (φ).—Now to make plain to you what is the sense and meaning of these words, We are at the marriage, and, the bridegroom is taken from us; ye shall note, that so long as God reveleth his mercy unto us, and giveth us of his benefits, either spiritual or corporal, we are said to be with the bridegroom at the marriage.—It is not without cause, that the Scripture doth so many times call all men here in this world by this word, earth: O thou earth, earth, earth, saith Jeremy, hear the word of the Lord. This our right name, calling and title, earth, earth, earth, pronounced by the Prophet, sheweth what we be indeed.—And do they not too frequently favor the allegorical manner of the interpreting the Scriptures, used by some of the Fathers? e. g. I (saith St. Jerome, upon the Prophet Agge) do think the silver, where-with the house of God is decked, to be the doctrine of the Scriptures, &c. And I do take gold to be that, which remaineth in the hid sense of the saints, and the secret of the heart, &c. Which is evident that the Apostle also meant of the saints [alluding to 1 Cor. iii. 12.] that by the gold, the hid sense, by silver, godly

(φ) The sense of the homily may perhaps after all be supposed to be sufficiently, and indeed very justly, expressed in these other words. ' We have nothing that good is, but of God. Let us therefore acknowledge ourselves before God (as we be indeed) miserable and wretched sinners. Let us all confess with mouth and heart, that we be full of imperfections: Let us know our own works, of what imperfection they be; and then we shall not stand foolishly and arrogantly in our own conceits, nor challenge any part of justification by our own merits or works. For truly there be imperfections in our best works. Let us therefore not be ashamed to confess plainly our state of imperfection, &c. To God therefore we must flee, or else shall we never find peace and quietness of conscience. He is the God which of his own mercy saveth us,—not for our own deserts and good deeds (which of ourselves we have none) but of his mere mercy freely, for Jesus Christ's sake, &c.' All which is unexceptionable, important, and necessary doctrine, founded upon the true sense of Scripture.

utterance, by precious stones, works, which please God, might be signified.

8. Do they not sometimes seem to consider *apocryphal books* as canonical?—It is observed, that the book of *Sapience* or *Wisdom*, which is cited eleven times in the homilies for *rogation-week*, is there quoted as if it were a work of *Solomon*, which others, with much better reason, have given to *Philo. Baruch* is twice honored with the title of *Prophet*, and his book cited as part of the *Scriptures*, in the first homily against *rebellion*. And it gives one some pain to find *Tobit* (notwithstanding our sixth article) ranked among the *inspired Writers*, and his book introduced as *Scripture*, indited by the Holy Spirit. ‘The same lesson doth the Holy Ghost ‘also teach in sundry places of the Scripture,’ specifying immediately, *Tob. iv.* and giving the words; *2d hom. of alms-deeds.*

9. Are there not some expressions in the homilies, which for want of some little guard or explanation, may be too liable to be interpreted in favor of some popish tenets? e. g. Absolution *hath the promise of the forgiveness of sin.* Hom. of *com. pr.* And do not these discourses, written at some distance of time by different authors, sometimes clash a little with each other, some declarations being truly protestant, and others partly popish? For tho’ the homily of *common prayer and sacraments* says rightly, *As for the number of sacraments instituted by Christ, and expressly commanded in the New Testament, there be but two, namely Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord;* yet the first homily of *swearing* speaks in express terms of *the sacrament of matrimony*, immediately after that of *baptism*. And Bishop *Cosin* (or else *Overall*) has taken notice, that in the second paragraph of the act of Parliament, at the beginning of

of the book of Common-prayer, it is said, ' That
 ' all Ministers shall be bounden to say and use—the
 ' celebration of the Lord's Supper (*which*, says he,
 ' is one sacrament) and administration of each of
 ' the sacraments,' *which*, he also observes, is *more*
than one besides. Nichols's *append.* sect. 67. And
 indeed one of these two Prelates, in the same ap-
 pendix, lays an unfavorable hold on an expression
 in the prayer for the *Church militant*, as what he is
 willing to allow to be a recommendation of the
 dead, &c. But Dr. Nichols confutes him.

10. Can the following character and comparison
 be thought to be a just one, and every way unex-
 ceptionable, as it is here applied? ' God did put
 ' light in the heart of his faithful and true Minister,
 ' of most famous memory King *Henry* the eighth,
 ' and gave him the knowledge of his word, and an
 ' earnest affection to seek his glory, &c. as he gave
 ' the like spirit unto the most noble and famous
 ' Princes; *Josaphat, Josias, and Ezechias. Third*
hom. of charity.

Upon a review of this section, the following re-
 marks occur. (1). If it were now insisted upon, as
 it was at first (x), that these *homilies* should be read

(x) All which *homilies*, her Majesty [Queen *Eliz*] com-
 mandeth and straitly chargeth all Parsons, Vicars, Curates, and
 all others having spiritual cure, *every Sunday and Holy-day in*
the year, at the ministring of the holy communion,—to read
 and declare to their parishioners plainly and distinctly one of the
 said homilies, in such order as they stand in the book, except
 there be a sermon;—and then for that cause only, and for
 none other, the reading of the said homily to be deferred to the
next Sunday or Holy-day following, &c. So that by this it
 would seem, that even *Sermons* are not to thrust out *homilies*,
 any more than they ought to do *catechising*; since the homilies
 are at least to have their turns alternately with sermons; and
 when read over, are (as the *preface* adds) to be *repeted and read*
again, &c.

every

every Sunday and Holiday in all Churches and Chapels, is it not probable, that we should hear great and frequent complaints against them, both from Clergy and Laity? But now being, as is generally supposed, left to *discretion*, few or none complain; because it is presumed, that few or none read or hear them read.—Would not the case be much the same with our *articles*, if they were as little read and studied, as our homilies are thought to be? And yet, is not *subscription* of as much consequence as reading? The homilies, it is said, are subscribed to, tho' not read in public. The articles are read in public, and are publicly assented to, whenever they are so read; tho' the occasion of using this form happens comparatively but seldom. The grievance, therefore, and consequently the ground of complaint, if any, must be the same in both cases.—Nor, by the way, is the promise of *canonical obedience*, if you go to the original sense of it, much better, or less a hardship on the Clergy, than their subscriptions and declarations to the contents of either of these. For *Lyndwood* (who was a most competent judge) expressly tells us, that *canonical obedience* is obedience to the *canons*. *L. 1. tit. de major & obed.* And indeed, why else is that obedience so precisely called *canonical*, when it would not be difficult to find out another epithet, every way sufficient, and far less exceptionable?—(2). Some Curates, and other inferior Clergy, are so very poor, that they cannot purchase a licence to *preach* (ψ). What shall they do? They usually put off the expence as long as they well can; especially if they have any prospect of removing into another diocese, where (the former, if they have taken any, being in course void) they must take a fresh licence.—But if they are called upon, and refuse, what then?

(ψ) See *Metford's* discourse of licences to preach, 1698.

They may be obliged. And supposing they are connived at, as they sometimes are in very necessitous circumstances, still they are to read the *homilies* to their people; the rubrick at least so obliging them. Were they allowed to read the *Whole duty of man*, which in some respects may be as good as the homilies, and with as good conscience subscribed to, where would be the harm? Bishop Bull (as true a friend as any to our Church) allowed the Clergy of his diocese, that could not preach, to read a chapter sometimes out of that book to their congregations^(u). *Qu.* by what authority? And *quare* also as to that restriction in the ordination of Deacons, *Take thou authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God, and to preach the same, if thou be thereto licensed*. Why, are they not licensed, if not to preach, yet to read the homilies? And are not those homilies agreeable to the Gospel? If not, why is it said (*Artic. 35.*) *We judge them to be read in churches by the Ministers?*—This then, we hope, may be some reasonable excuse for poor curates, and be at the same time an argument for drawing up a better body of homilies, and thereby making their other labours more serviceable to the real interest of religion. So much time (as one of our Bishops observes) is spent in composing sermons, that there is little or none left for visiting the sick, and other parochial duties; which in some parishes, even where the maintenance is very incompetent, would take up almost the whole of a man's time, to discharge to due advantage; and whereon a Clergiman's pains might oftentimes be more usefully bestowed, than on compositions for the pulpit. Besides, that the clashing, which we hear of, not unfrequently, between the doctrines of some preachers, and sometimes in the same church, nay and on the same day,

(u) Life by Nelson, p. 420.

seems to point out the expedience at least, if not necessity of making such a provision. And it is thought it would not be difficult to form a most valuable system of this kind, being judiciously collected from the best sermons we have extant.

Lastly, it being universally allowed, that we have no *discipline*, or if we are supposed to have any, yet it being certain, that we do not make *the right use of it*; may it not, upon this consideration, deserve our most serious thought, whether it will be proper to retain those words any longer in our homily for *Whitsunday*, to be a standing reproach to us and our Church? *viz.* ‘The *true Church* hath always ‘three notes or marks, whereby it is known: Pure ‘and sound doctrine, the sacraments ministred according to Christ’s holy institution, and *the right ‘use of ecclesiastical DISCIPLINE.*’ For is it not easy to discern the inference, that will arise from hence, to the disparagement of our Church, even upon the foot of her own declaration? Since, as Dr. Bennet observes, a Church, *as a Church, must have the essential properties of a Church; because those essential properties constitute its nature; and without them, it cannot be a Church.* And a Church, by moral verity (the only verity we are now concerned with) *is then only true, when it keeps to the rule which Christ hath set it, and really is what it is required to be.* Now it is certain, that due discipline, as well as purity of doctrine, and a due administration of the sacraments, is required by Christ’s rule. ‘And this our Church herself, teaches, in the second part of the homily for ‘*Whitsunday.*’ (On art. xix.) According to this rule then, it seems, that one essential property of a Church (or if you rather chuse the expression, of *the true Church,*) is wanting in ours, to make up the definition. And if any one should think fit to say,

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with

with regard to this homily, as Dr. *Bennet* has justly enough said with respect to the xixth article, ' Our Church doth not *here* pretend to give an accurate definition of a Church' (which, by the way, it may reasonably be expected she should give, in all such positive declarations) the Church herself may be permitted to give her own answer, in the words, which she immediately subjoins, relating to this very point: ' This description of the Church is agreeable both to the Scriptures of God, and also to the doctrine of the ancient Fathers; so that none may justly find fault therewith.

We have now, through the divine assistance, brought this work to a conclusion. If it be built upon a sure foundation, it will stand; but if not, we are content it should fall. Whatever may be its fate, it contains, we think, upon the whole, a sufficient demonstration, that several things in our Church, and those of consequence to its welfare, demand alteration; and that therefore if they be not altered, after such humble and earnest application, and such a large and clear detail of facts, the fault and the blame will rest somewhere; and it is not difficult to foresee what will be the consequence,—that it will not be so easy from henceforward to answer objections, and our interest will decline, as our reproach increases: Which can only be prevented by making the requisite emendations. We have only this to add; If the cause we have engaged in, be not, what we sincerely believe it to be, *viz.* the cause of religion and truth; we only desire to be convinced, that it is not, by the force of clear and satisfactory reasons, and we shall readily submit. But if it be, we hope, that good men will favor it, and that God will prosper it.



I N I S.

